

Silicon Times Report

The Original Independent OnLine Magazine"
(Since 1987)

February 09, 1996

No. 1206

Silicon Times Report International OnLine Magazine
Post Office Box 6672
Jacksonville, Florida 32221-6155

STR Electronic Publishing Inc.
A subsidiary of
STR Worldwide CompNews Inc.

R.F. Mariano, Editor
Featured in ITCNet's ITC_STREPORT Echo
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From the Editor's Desk...

Hi to all!! Predictably, this is the week that the truth time brings forth shines once again. Be sure to read our STR Confidential Item this week. Another four weeks has past and still nothing from the giant. CANON CORP. as far as drivers for their most recent Scanners. If you'll recall, Canon promised the new 32 bit drivers for Win95/NT for the end of the year. (1995) Once that arrived and there were no drivers, we were told by mid February 1996. Now, when one reads the traffic in the Canon areas, they're saying the February "thing" is untrue. I guess one cannot even believe the CEO's secretary these days at Canon. Its sad. Its a great scanner (IX-4015-4025) that's being driven into the toilet by sheer incompetence. This is an ongoing story of thousands of users apparently being left "holding the bag" by Canon. Perhaps the Justice Department that seems to be so busy "Dogging" Bill Gates and Microsoft ought to take a look at Canon doing some "DOGGING" of its own!

It sad day indeed when an industry that profit oriented loses sight of the personal touch in dealing with the consumers who. make it all happen. Its not that the industry hasn't had its "incidents of learning". Intel's "Pentium -o-Rama" and then its Bus Mastering "Dilly" should've all be very fresh in many of the Whig's minds. Unfortunately, they seem to all have very short memories or, perhaps feel they're above such acts of sincerity. Canon NEEDS a wake-up call. Maybe a tied up switchboard for a week or two will give them the "message" that "the customers come first" not their "cause for convenience". The latest is Canon is now trying to blame Microsoft!! Incredible, simply incredible. Its another horror story in the making.

Of Special Note:

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STReport is now ready to offer much more in the way of serving the Networks, Online Services and Internet's vast, fast growing site list and userbase. We now have our very own WEB/NewsGroup/FTP Site and although its in its early stages of construction, do stop by and have a look see. Since We've received numerous requests to receive STReport from a wide variety of Internet addressees, we were compelled to put together an Internet distribution/mailing list for those who wished to receive STReport on a

regular basis, the file is ZIPPED, then UUENCODED. Unfortunately, we've also received a number of opinions that the UUENCODING was a real pain to deal with. So, as of October 01,1995, you'll be able to download STReport directly from our very own SERVER & WEB Site. While there, be sure to join our STR list. In any case, our current Internet mailing list will continue to be used for at least the next eight weeks. Each of our readers will have by then, received their information packet about how they may upgrade their personal STR News Services.

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STReport Headline News

LATE BREAKING INDUSTRY-WIDE NEWS

Weekly Happenings in the Computer World

Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

Telecom Overhaul Bill Approved

A half hour after the House of Representatives' approval of a major telecommunications bill, the Senate yesterday followed suit and sent the measure to President Clinton's desk. Representing the most sweeping revision of telecommunications law in the past six decades, the compromise bill -- which greatly expanding the ability of television, phone and cable outfits to compete in each others markets -- is expected to be signed into law by the president within a week, says Associated Press writer Jeannine Aversa.

"I think you'll see companies reacting fairly quickly," Vice President Al Gore told Aversa, who noted the overhaul of the 1934 Communications Act will allow head-to-head competition between cable TV and local and long-distance telephone companies, deregulate cable rates and allow media companies to more easily expand their holdings. The measure also includes controversial prohibitions against smutty material on computer networks and TV.

AP says the new law will enable cable companies to speed up delivery of high-

speed modems that connect customers to the Internet, other computer services, while phone companies say they'll accelerate movies-on-demand and interactive television. "And broadcasters say once they switch over to digital technology, they may offer multiple channels of programs, home shopping and transmit sport scores to laptop computers," Aversa comments.

AP notes that how long the telecommunications transformation takes is affected by the Federal Communications Commission, which will be in charge of writing many of the rules under the new law. The FCC already has begun the ground work for some of those rules and will move as quickly as it can, says FCC Chairman Reed Hundt. On the controversial net porn sections of the measure, Aversa notes, "Once the law takes effect, people would be fined or thrown in jail if they're caught transmitting smut and other indecent materials to minors over computer networks."

While the Christian Coalition hails this as a move to make the Internet "child safe and family friendly," civil liberties and computer user groups vowed to fight the provision on constitutional grounds. The measure also gives parents a powerful new tool -- a computer chip in TV sets allowing them to keep violent, sexually oriented or other objectionable shows off their screens, though the TV industry has promised to fight V-chip provision in court.

Suits Will Attack Telecom Law

Civil libertarians will sue to challenge a new telecommunications bill President Clinton is expected to sign this week because of its regulation of "smut" in cyberspace, noting it also could hamper women's ability to get abortion data on the Net. Philip Gutis of the American Civil Liberties Union told Roger Fillion of the Reuter News Service, "The minute after he signs it, we're going to be in court seeking a restraining order."

About 20 groups and individuals -- including privacy rights activists, Planned Parenthood and others -- already have joined the ACLU to become plaintiffs in the case, Gutis says, citing constitutional concerns over free speech and privacy. And Reuters says other groups plan to file separate suits. As noted, the bill imposes criminal penalties on people who make available "indecent" material to minors on the Internet or a computer online service. Reuters adds, though, that it "could make it a crime to post information on the Internet or a computer bulletin board information that could be used to produce an abortion. Lawyers said the language is vulnerable in court."

White House officials says Clinton is expected tomorrow to sign the bill, which overhauls the nation's 62-year-old communications laws and allows the telephone, cable-TV and broadcast industries to jump into each others' businesses. The disputed "cyberporn" provision imposes criminal penalties of up to \$250,000 and two years in prison. Reuters says opponents contend the language is too vague and could encompass a great deal of private communications, suggesting, for example, that people quoting passages from such books as "Catcher in the Rye" could get in legal trouble. They also say it could inhibit the flow of information about safe sex or the incidence of rapes in Bosnia.

On the other side, Rep. Henry Hyde, an Illinois Republican, defended the language of the new law, saying it "in no way is intended to inhibit free speech about the topic of abortion, nor in any way to limit medical or scientific discourse on the Internet." Hyde argues the language "prohibits the use of an interactive computer service for the explicit purpose of selling, procuring or facilitating the sale of drugs, medicines or other

devices intended for use in producing abortions."

Online Copyright Bill Advanced

A bipartisan bill that would update the copyright law to cover material sent over the Internet drew support from the movie and music industries at hearings yesterday in the U.S. House of Representatives. However, a computer industry official urged caution. Co-sponsor Carlos Moorhead, a California Republican and chairman of the Judiciary subcommittee on courts and intellectual property, told members the Net needs creative minds, "but people will not put their work products on the Internet and give consumers the desired services if they cannot protect them."

He said the bill, co-sponsored by Rep. Patricia Schroeder D-Colorado), would clarify that public distribution rights in copyright law applied to digital transmission on computers. The Reuter News Service says the measure also would "outlaw devices to avoid measures to protect copyrighted material and prohibit giving false information to circumvent copyright protection." But the bill, based on recommendations by an administration task force, would not change the liability standards for online distributors to protect copyright holders, Moorhead said.

Supporting the measure at yesterday's hearing was Jack Valenti, president of the Motion Picture Association of America, who suggested it should include criminal as well as civil penalties for copyright violators. He added the panel must resist calls for exemptions for online service providers whose users violate copyrights. Others backing the bill were Broadcast Music Inc, representing more than 180,000 songwriters, composers and music publishers and the Business Software Alliance.

But questioning the bill was the Computer and Communications Industry Association, which said the measure may go too far in protecting copyright holders at the expense of distributors. "If online service providers are strictly liable for the infringements of their subscribers, they will pass the cost of this liability onto the consumer in the form of higher access fees," said CCIA President Ed Black. That, in turn, will impede development of sophisticated telecommunications networks that carry voice, video and data, he said.

Writing for the Associated Press, reporter Carolyn Skorneck says Rep. Rick Boucher, D-Virginia, advocates exempting online providers from copyright infringement laws, saying online service providers cannot know what all their subscribers are doing and therefore shouldn't be held responsible for their actions. However, President Frances Preston of Broadcast Music Inc. told the committee that if the online services were exempt from liability, "copyright owners' recourse will be severely limited to pursuit of individual network users whose identities are typically known only to the services to which they subscribe."

Skorneck says Boucher also urged the legislation -- based in large part on Clinton administration recommendations -- be delayed until online service providers and producers of copyright materials agree on the liability issue. But Valenti called for quick action on the bill, cautioning that "whoever wants to hold this bill hostage can refuse to come to a conclusion." AP says Preston and Valenti both rejected Boucher's offer to write into the bill the conclusions of the few courts that have handled such cases.

Notes Skorneck, "Those courts have cleared online service providers of liability because they either were not actively involved in the copyright infringement or they did not know it was occurring." On this, Preston said

that if the law contained a standard requiring providers to have "actual knowledge" of a copyright violation to be held liable, "we fear the creation of an online environment in which ignorance is bliss," encouraging them to "turn a blind eye" to unlawful activities.

Bill Signing Prompts Protests

A landmark telecommunications bill giving consumers wider choices for their cable TV and local and long-distance phone services is to be signed by President Clinton this morning. In cyberspace, the signing is being greeted with protests from those who say the new law's restrictions against "smut" on computer networks amounts to censorship. Their anger is expected to manifest itself in the form of lawsuits from civil libertarians.

In Washington, the signing is to take place at the Library of Congress in an elaborate ceremony including Vice President Al Gore and Republican Speaker of the House of Representatives Newt Gingrich. The measure, which Congress has been seeking to pass since the late 1980s, breaks down barriers erected by communications laws written 62 years ago and allows broadcast and phone companies to move into each others' businesses. But it also makes it a crime punishable by \$250,000 in fines and two years in prison to send "indecent" material that could be viewed by a minor over a computer network.

In protest, about 150 people and groups have pledged today to turn black the backgrounds of their home page on the Internet's World Wide Web, according to Shabbir Safdar, head of the Voters Telecommunications Watch, an online group that organizes grass-roots action against what it views as threats to free speech and privacy. Safdar said the protesters include the Community Breast Health Project, Surf Watch, Sonoma State University, the Abortion Rights Activist Page, Internet on Ramp, authors, computer programmers and graphics designers.

"People around the Net are very concerned this will chill speech," Jerry Berman, head of the Center for Democracy and Technology Policy, told Associated Press writer Jeannine Aversa. "This protest is a demonstration that many people are publishers on the Net. ... There is a lot of sentiment and unhappiness on the Net to do something." Aversa said the protest is expected to last for 48 hours.

Meanwhile, as reported, the American Civil Liberties Union and others say they will challenge the anti-smut provision in federal court, saying it is overly broad and would outlaw electronic transmissions of legal speech, including literature such as "Catcher in the Rye," rap lyrics and profane conversations.

ACLU Brings Cyber Speech Suit

The American Civil Liberties Union and 19 other groups today carried out their threat to ask a federal court to block a new law banning "indecent speech" online, saying it is censorship that even affects the availability of abortion data. Before the ink had dried on President Clinton's signature on the new telecommunications overhaul bill that contains the controversial "cyberporn" provisions, civil libertarians in Philadelphia were asking for a hearing to impose an immediate ban on the Communications Decency Act of 1996 while their suit is considered.

Associated Press writer Dinah Wisenberg Brin reports the groups argue that online speech is akin to print media and private communication rather than television and radio, which are regulated by federal law. Also, says Stefan Presser, legal director of the ACLU of Pennsylvania, "Astonishingly they

haven't bothered to define what 'indecent speech' is. That's one of the things that makes this law blatantly unconstitutional." Presser said the new law, which is just a small portion of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 signed by Clinton, also restricts transmission of abortion information.

As reported elsewhere, the bill's signing has sparked electronic demonstrations around cyberspace, including on the Internet's World Wide Web, where some home pages were being "blacked out," characterized as a "virtual mourning" protest. (Opponents changed the background color of their Web pages to black with white or gray text. Ordinarily, text on the World Wide Web is dark-colored on a light-colored background.)

Meanwhile, Sen. Jim Exon, D-Nebraska, who sponsored the "cybersmut" law, told Brin he is confident the law will withstand the challenge. "The ACLU continues to raise red herrings that have nothing to do with our proposal. The legislation will not ban works of art or medical warnings because they would not be, 'in context, patently offensive' under the Supreme Court's indecency standard used in our legislation." Clinton has expressed reservations about the decency provision, but supported the overall bill.

Germans Want to Block "Net Nazis"

A month after demanding the blocking of sexual-oriented data flowing in from the Internet, prosecutors in Germany now have warned online services to also not allow neo-Nazi material to come into that country. From Berlin, prosecutors have notified America Online that it may be charged with inciting racial hatred. This comes a week after prosecutors served similar notice to CompuServe and to T-Online, a division of the German phone company.

"Publishing or distributing neo-Nazi literature or literature denying the Holocaust occurred is illegal in Germany," Associated Press writer Paul Geitner notes in a report today. "Violators can be charged with inciting racial hatred, but it is unclear how such laws can be enforced in the free-for-all atmosphere of cyberspace." Geitner says prosecutors in Mannheim are considering bringing incitement charges against the three services for allowing access to material posted on the Internet by Ernst Zuendel, a German neo-Nazi living in Toronto.

AP reports T-Online, Germany's largest Internet access provider, responded to the prosecutors' investigations by blocking its million subscribers from gaining access to the computer in California where Zuendel had posted his tracts. Immediately, German computerists accused T-Online of overreacting, because the block also prevented them from reaching more than 1,500 other sites on that part of the network. Meanwhile, CompuServe officials told the wire service the company has not blocked the California server but said it is working with the prosecutors to find a solution.

An AOL spokesman in Hamburg said his employer also is happy to work with the prosecutors, saying the company is "totally opposed" to illegal propaganda but that commercial online companies have as much control over materials posted on the Net as phone companies have over their customers' conversations. Zuendel successfully appealed his 1988 conviction in Canada for publishing false statements about the Holocaust in his pamphlet "Did 6 Million Really Die?" He was convicted of inciting racial hatred during a 1991 visit to Germany and ordered to pay the equivalent of \$9,000.

AP notes CompuServe has some 220,000 Germany subscribers, while AOL, in a new joint venture with Germany's Bertelsmann AG, has 40,000 subscribers there. As reported, the controversy over censorship on the Net heated up last month when German authorities demanded CompuServe block access to sex-oriented

areas of the Net because of pressure from prosecutors in another German state, Bavaria, trying to clamp down on child pornography.

CyberAngels Group E-Bombed

A volunteer group called CyberAngels, bent on patrolling the Net for online evils as a cyberspace version of the Guardian Angels, now is being mail-bombed electronically by a group calling itself "Darkspace."

The email bombs effectively have put the CyberAngels out of business, at least temporarily, Colin "Gabriel" Hatcher, director of the CyberAngels, told reporter Lynn Walford of United Press International. "We've been getting email bombs for the last eight months," Hatcher said. "The terrorists are forging our email address, subscribing us to email mailing lists.

At one point we had over 13,000 email messages that almost put down our Internet server. We are under attack 24 hours a day." UPI says Darkspace apparently doesn't like the Angels silently monitoring chat sites online. The CyberAngels says they are looking for pedophiles who prey on underage kids, adding they believe their presence keeps the chat areas in check and has led to investigations of Net crimes by authorities.

"Members of the group advised the German government, found prostitution ... discovered death threats and gangs, and find kids seeing pictures of child pornography, bestiality and necrophilia," Walford writes. CyberAngels is a division of the Guardian Angels and was formed in the June 1995 when Guardian Angel founder/President Curtis Sliwa mentioned his email address on his radio show in New York City. The group received more than 300 email messages from parents concerned about the safety of the Internet and their children.

The group went global last August when it offered a World Wide Web site on the Internet -- SafeSurf (reached at Web address <http://www.safesurf.com/cyberangels/>). Says UPI, "The membership of the group totals over 450 members of all ages from places as far away as Malaysia, Brazil, and the United Arab Emirates. The CyberAngels usually have 5-10 volunteers a day join their organization." Now, though, says the wire service, the email bombing is preventing the organization from functioning.

"When the CyberAngels try to investigate and find out who is subscribing them to the massive lists," writes Walford, "the Internet service providers say they do not know who is sending the messages. Each message needs to be read and sorted, then someone has to unsubscribe the group from the listserv (mailing list). One of the bombings took 25 hours to unsubscribe and correct."

Apple Ousts CEO Michael Spindler

Apple Computer Inc. CEO Michael Spindler has been quietly ousted by the computer maker's board of directors. Gilbert F. Amelio, an Apple board member who was president/CEO of National Semiconductor Inc., has been hired to run the company.

Writing in The Wall Street Journal this morning, reporter Jim Carlton says it isn't clear whether Amelio also will become Apple chairman, succeeding A.C. "Mike" Markkula, the longtime dominant power on Apple's board. "One executive close to the situation, however, said that Mr. Amelio would indeed assume that post," Carlton writes. And while details are sketchy, the Journal says people close to the situation think Amelio's appointment indicates Apple has rejected a buyout bid from Sun Microsystems Inc.

Silicon Valley consultant Regis McKenna is quoted in the paper as saying Spindler told him yesterday he was being succeeded as CEO by Amelio and that Apple officials "were faxing back and forth to get the release out." The Journal says the Apple board's decisions followed a meeting Wednesday at the St. Regis Hotel in New York and a conference call yesterday. As reported, the actions conclude days of speculation over Sun's bid for Apple and Spindler's fate.

"In the end," comments Carlton, "Apple's hand was forced by Sun's formal bids, which never exceeded the mid-\$20-a-share range, though other informal scenarios and prices, some of which were higher, were discussed. Mr. Spindler's fate was sealed by the loss of confidence in his ability to repair the ailing computer maker among Apple shareholders, customers and even top engineers, many of whom have been fleeing the company." The paper interprets the action as indicating Apple "intends to go solo for now, and to give Mr. Amelio, who has a reputation as a turnaround artist, wide latitude to try to repair Apple."

However, others think Amelio's ultimate goal may be "to polish Apple by rebuilding its stock price before looking for another buyer -- possibly even Sun -- when the maker of the Macintosh line of computers can command a higher price," the paper added. Meanwhile, it isn't clear who will succeed Amelio at National Semiconductor, but during the transition, the company will be run by a trio of chief operating officers in the structure Amelio set up last June. The three are Richard Beyer, Kirk Pond, and Ellen Hancock.

Apple Again Denies Rumors

Apple Computer Inc.'s new CEO, Gilbert F. Amelio, is picking up where his predecessor left off: denying that the company is up for sale. The troubled computer maker has issued a statement noting that it is not currently in merger discussions with any other party. Notes the statement: "It has been our long-standing policy not to comment on rumor and speculation, and that continues to be the case. Because of the destabilizing effect recent rumors and speculation have had on our business and our organization, we have decided in this one instance, however, to make an exception to our policy."

Apple blames ongoing merger rumors for contributing to a projected operating loss for its second quarter. Apple says the loss will "significantly exceed its first-quarter operating loss of \$69 million." But despite the company's current problems, Amelio remains upbeat about Apple's future. "I want to emphasize my strong belief, despite the obvious disappointment of our performance in the first and second quarters, that the foundations of our business are sound, and that Apple Computer has the ability, determination and staying power to deal with current challenges and to move forward with confidence into the future." Last Friday, Apple announced that its board of directors had hired Amelio, an Apple board member and previously chairman, president and CEO of National Semiconductor Corp., to replace Michael Spindler as CEO and A.C. "Mike" Markkula as chairman.

Blue January for Computer Workers

While AT&T Corp.'s 40,000 job cuts grabbed headlines last month, the computer industry was also beset by a surge of heavy downsizing in January, reports Challenger, Gray & Christmas Inc., an international outplacement consulting firm. Besides Apple Computer Inc.'s highly publicized decision to eliminate 1,300 positions from its workforce, Unisys Corp. and Quantum Corp. also announced layoffs of 7,900 and 2,250 jobs, respectively. In all, 11,997 computer industry job cuts were reported in January, says New York-based Challenger. The company notes that January has become the month for

employees to fear, while job seekers typically find more opportunities in January than in any other month of the year.

Apple Cuts Mac Performa Prices

Apple Computer Inc. is cutting prices by up to 11 percent on selected Macintosh Performa computers. The systems include the computer maker's 100MHz PowerPC-based Performa 6300CD model, which drops from \$2,799 to \$2,499, and the all-in-one PowerPC-based Performa 5215CD, which now costs \$1,899, down from \$1,999. Apple has also introduced a new Performa configuration, the Performa 6290CD. The system, which features 8MB of RAM, a 1.2GB hard disk, a four-speed CD-ROM drive, a 14-inch color monitor and a 28.8K bps data/fax modem, costs \$2,199. Apple also announced three programs that allow customers to receive rebates ranging from \$150 to \$500 when they purchase an Apple printer, display and Macintosh computer together.

Gates Says Apple Can Survive

"Near-death experiences often reinvigorate companies. There is still a chance for Apple, but it will take a great leader." That is Microsoft Corp. chief Bill Gates' take on Apple Computer Inc.'s current financial difficulties.

Reporting on remarks made yesterday at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, the Associated Press quotes Gates as saying he believes Apple's problems have stemmed mainly from:

- ' • A "failure to execute engineering."
- ' • And an inability to get new products out to the consumer quickly. For example, he said, if Apple had shipped its Copeland operating system last year it would have had more time to focus on Internet-related technology now.

As reported earlier, Apple last week ousted CEO Michael Spindler and hired Gilbert F. Amelio, an Apple board member who was president/CEO of National Semiconductor Inc., to run the company.

Robotics Withdraws Hayes Bid

A bid to acquire modem maker Hayes Microcomputer Products Inc. has been withdrawn by market leader U.S. Robotics Corp. As noted, U.S. Robotics had sought to acquire Hayes, which filed for Chapter 11 Bankruptcy in November 1994, under a plan of reorganization filed with the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Northern District of Georgia in October 1995. Reporting from Robotics's Skokie, Illinois, headquarters, the Reuter News Service says the company withdrew its plan to the Bankruptcy Court during ongoing hearings on the confirmation of two other competing reorganization plans.

"In addition," says Reuters, "U.S. Robotics' proposed transaction had not been cleared by the Federal Trade Commission, which was reviewing it under the Hart-Scott-Rodino antitrust law." The wire service says the court hearings continue with respect to the two remaining plans for the reorganization of Hayes which were proposed by Hayes as debtor-in-possession and by the Official Committee of Unsecured Creditors.

"U.S. Robotics continues to be interested in the case as a creditor," adds Reuters, "and it has also objected to certain provisions of the other plans which would have the effect of transferring a license under certain patents owned by a U.S. Robotics subsidiary to the reorganized entity." As reported earlier, Diamond Multimedia Systems Inc. last month modified its bid for Hayes, increasing the total consideration to the shareholders of Hayes from \$100 million to \$111 million, payable in a combination of cash and Diamond

stock.

NEC Boosts Packard Bell by \$630M

Packard Bell Electronics is on its way to becoming the world's biggest supplier of personal computers on the strength of a new \$650 million deal in which Japan's NEC Corp. injects additional funds into the U.S. computer company. Part of the plan calls for Packard Bell to take over another U.S. PC maker, Zenith Data Systems, which will push the combined production of the NEC-Packard group to about 7.5 million PCs a year, reports Yuko Inoue of the Reuter News Service.

NEC says the deal also will strengthen the global alliance between NEC, Packard Bell and financially troubled French computer maker Cie des Machines Bull, in which NEC holds a 17 percent stake. Zenith Data is owned by the Bull Group. Reuters says NEC will inject an additional \$283 million into Packard Bell. Including the takeover of Zenith Data, which will occur at the end of this month, Packard Bell will receive the equivalent of more than \$650 million from NEC and Bull, an NEC spokesman said.

NEC President Hisashi Kaneko told a news conference in Tokyo today, "By joining such a big camp, NEC can save on production and procurement costs while obtaining a big market for its semiconductors," adding NEC and Packard Bell will consider joint use of PC factories and might cooperate in distributing their products and providing support services. Packard Bell currently is ranked by market researcher Dataquest as the world's fourth biggest PC supplier, with 45 percent of the U.S. retail market. Reuters says NEC, Japan's biggest PC maker, aims to sell more than 3.5 million PCs in Japan and the United States during the business year which ends this March. NEC also says the merged Packard Bell aims to list its shares on the U.S. stock market in the 1996 business year.

AOL Denies Merger Report

A report that America Online Inc. is holding merger talks with Netscape Communications Corp. is being denied by the online service. "We're not in merger talks with Netscape," an America Online spokeswoman told the Reuter news service. Earlier today, a director of Bertelsmann AG, a major media company and an AOL investor, had said that talks between AOL and Netscape were underway and could result in a merger.

Reuters observes that although the AOL spokeswoman denied the merger talks, she would not comment on whether America Online and Netscape have held talks about a potential alliance based on products or other arrangements. Thomas Middelhoff, a Bertelsmann board member, commented that the aim of the talks was to strengthen Netscape and AOL and marginalize software giant Microsoft Corp. in the race for control of Internet standards. "An alliance could go as far as a merger," Middelhoff said. Netscape, a fast-growing Internet developer, is best known for its browser software.

Microsoft Shifts Away From MSN

Microsoft Corp. is stopping development of a long-awaited programming tool for its own Microsoft Network online service, concentrating instead on a new version for general use with the Internet's World Wide Web. Writing in The Wall Street Journal this morning, reporter Don Clark notes the project code-named "Blackbird" originally was designed to help independent companies create proprietary information content for the Microsoft Network and was seen as a key tool for competing against online services.

"Lately, however," says Clark, "Microsoft has sharply shifted direction toward the Internet's Web and away from proprietary content. It now is encouraging content providers to set up Web sites that can be viewed by any personal computer user with access to the Internet, not only by MSN members." In December, Microsoft said it would create a new version of Blackbird to be compatible with the standard Web format, and renamed the product Internet Studio. "Now Microsoft is dropping the MSN-only version of the product altogether," says the Journal, "shifting programmers to the Internet version to finish it more quickly."

The Journal says the move "disrupts" the plans of some content partners who had been working on MSN services based on Blackbird, quoting Jesse Berst, editorial director of Windows Watcher newsletter, as saying, "It has got to be a letdown for people who have invested months and hundreds of thousands of dollars on Blackbird." Noting Microsoft recruited more than 100 companies of various sizes to create content for MSN, the Journal observes, "Some already have posted complaints on the service about technical glitches, a shortage of information from Microsoft management and other problems. The latest move may further tarnish MSN's image among those companies."

In fact, one MSN content developer, who asked not to be identified, told Clark, "It's catastrophic. It's one thing to migrate the technology and its another to abandon it." Meanwhile, in a message to content developers on MSN, Microsoft Vice President Roger Heinen characterized the Blackbird move as a "difficult decision" and acknowledged some impact on the developers, but argued that shifting resources to the Internet product will allow Microsoft to add advanced features more quickly. Observing that the company hasn't disclosed when the new product will be ready, the paper quotes Tom Button, a director of marketing in Microsoft's developer division, as saying, "We really don't have a reliable schedule yet."

Feds on Microsoft's Case Again

Microsoft Corp. just can't seem to shake Justice Department investigators. The latest is the feds now have developed what is characterized by The Wall Street Journal this morning as "an unusual interest" in the company's purchase of Internet software firm Vermeer Technologies Inc. Journal reporter Don Clark quotes Vermeer CEO John Mandile as saying the Justice Department asked the company for information about the acquisition, but he believed the request to be routine. As noted, the Justice Department has been conducting an anti-trust investigation into various aspects of Microsoft's business for more than a year.

The software giant announced the estimated \$130 million purchase of Vermeer last month. A price was not announced at the time of the acquisition. Notes Clark, "The Justice Department or Federal Trade Commission review most large mergers under the Hart-Scott-Rodino antitrust act. But Microsoft and Vermeer concluded that they weren't required to file documents with the government under the act, and the deal was completed before it was announced. Antitrust lawyers said that Vermeer's annual sales may have fallen below a \$10 million threshold that usually triggers a review."

Win95 Virus Discovered in UK

UK researchers says they have discovered the first virus specifically targeted at Microsoft Corp.'s Windows 95 operating system. The rogue software is not especially powerful, but it can corrupt programs, then spread to other users' machines.

In London, Paul Ducklin, an analyst for the British anti-virus software company Sophos, told Associated Press writer Sue Leeman, "It is the first

virus we've seen that is written specifically for Windows 95, so, although it is not particularly well-written, Boza will go down in history."

Leeman says analysts have named the virus Boza after a Bulgarian liquor "so powerful that just looking at it will give you a headache." Fortunately, though, the virus does not appear to be particularly contagious, says Alan Solomon, chairman of the S and S International software firm., "To infect someone else's machine, you would have to give them an infected program, and they would have to run it. Most people don't swap programs around like that."

Ducklin said Boza is not yet "in the wild," that it is circulating mainly among companies that make anti-virus programs and that software is available to destroy it. AP says while analysts don't know who created the virus, there is a clue in one of the messages that Boza occasionally throws on screens: "VLAD Australia does it again with the world's first Win95 virus."

The wire service notes Win95 differs from Microsoft's previous operating systems in that it can run programs whose instructions are 32 bits long, rather than 16 bits, allowing greater flexibility through the increased memory. Boza is written specifically to corrupt 32-bit programs. "The virus attaches itself to existing programs," says Leeman. "It makes copies of itself while they run, and the copies are then attached to other programs."

Virus Specialists Tackle Boza

Anti-virus software vendors such as Symantec Corp. and McAfee Associates now are working with Microsoft Corp. to combat the new Boza virus that specifically targets the Windows 95 operating system. As reported, the virus, discovered by British researchers, is not especially powerful, but it can corrupt programs and spread to other users' machines.

Reporting this morning from Microsoft's Redmond, Washington, headquarters, the Reuter News Service quotes officials with the software publisher as emphasizing Boza is not contained within the Windows 95 product itself. Adds Reuters, "Although the virus is not widespread, users of Windows 95 might encounter it by downloading and running an infected program from the Internet, an electronic bulletin board or online service, or by running a program from a floppy disk containing the virus."

Microsoft said McAfee has posted an anti-virus update to address this virus, and Symantec will do so shortly. "Running an infected program can infect up to three 32-bit Windows-based applications in the current directory," Reuters reports. "The infected program may display a message from the authors of the virus on a computer screen ... Microsoft said it suggests that customers do not run unknown programs that are downloaded or copied from a floppy disk and that the computer be checked periodically for viruses."

Second Win95 Virus Discovered The second virus in less than a week to target Microsoft Corp.'s Windows 95 operating system has been uncovered, this time in Venezuela. Microsoft officials in Caracas tell the Reuter News Service a virus

named "Chavez" wipes out information on computers after displaying a Venezuelan flag and a picture of retired Lt. Col. Hugo Chavez, a revolutionary leader of a failed putsch that shook Venezuela four years ago.

Describing what happens on infected systems, a Microsoft spokesman told the wire service, "At noon and 6 p.m. the national anthem starts to ring out, the flag appears on the screen with the effigy of Chavez and the slogan 'Let's all fight for Venezuela.'" After that, all information stored on the hard disk begins to vanish. The 41-year-old Chavez, who led a bloody army coup

attempt on Feb. 4, 1992, "has recently adopted a higher profile in the country," Reuters noted. "In a television interview marking the fourth anniversary on Sunday of the putsch attempt, he urged President Rafael Caldera to organize a referendum on his rule or risk 'growing civil resistance.'"

As noted earlier this week, UK researchers discovered the first virus to specifically targeted Win95, a rogue program dubbed Boza, not especially powerful, but capable of corrupting programs, then spreading to other users' machines. As reported, Microsoft officials already are working with anti-virus software vendors to combat it.

Managers Look for Computer Help

More than half of the managers responding to a recent poll said they learned skills in such technical areas as word processing and electronic communications from their administrative assistants. In the survey, 53 percent of the executives said they had learned a technical or computer skill from an administrative assistant. The survey was sponsored by OfficeTeam, a temporary help service company based in Menlo Park, California. It polled 150 human resources and other executives from the nation's 1,000 largest companies. "Today, being a secretary or assistant requires more than solely providing administrative support -- it can also mean being the first to master the company's new software applications or e-mail system," says Andrew Denka, OfficeTeam's executive director.

"Administrative professionals who not only keep pace with new technology, but also are able to communicate this knowledge to others can be indispensable to a company." More Seniors Using Computers The stereotype of seniors as technology resistant is out of date, finds a new national survey sponsored by Intel Corp. and conducted by SeniorNet, an online service geared toward older adults. According to the survey, overall computer ownership among adults ages 55 and older is 30 percent, up from 21 percent in the SeniorNet survey conducted last July. Computer ownership among adults ages 55 to 64 is now 40 percent. Among people 75 or older, 11 percent now own a PC. "The growth rate shows that seniors are aware and enthusiastic about the digital revolution and high- performance computing," says Steve Nachtsheim, an Intel vice president.

Attesting to the growing influence of the Internet and online communications, 17 percent of senior computer owners said they "regularly use an online service." Two-thirds (65 percent) said they had "accessed the Internet in the past month." "This survey shows that the older adults who have been on the periphery of the computer age are now rapidly moving into the mainstream," says Richard Adler, vice president of development at SeniorNet and author of the survey. "They are quickly catching up to the younger generations."

PhotoShop 3.0.5 STR Focus

I N F O - S H E E T

Adobe PhotoShop 3.0.5 Windows

February 1996 Introduction

Adobe PhotoShop 3.0 for Windows has been a 32-bit application since its initial release in November 1994 and runs on Windows 95 without modification. The 3.0.4 release shipped in July 1995 met most, but not all, of the Windows 95 logo requirements established by Microsoft. A version 3.0.5 update was released in January 1996 in the U.S., however, that is specifically designed to take fuller advantage of the power and ease-of-use built into Windows 95, and proudly bears the Windows 95 logo certification.

Feature Changes (Both Full and LE Versions)

- Adoption of Windows 95 user interface guidelines - Registry of file and application icons - Use of common dialogs - Use of system colors and metrics
- Use of right mouse button to activate Commands palette - Support for long filenames and UNC pathnames
- Support for OLE 2.0 object linking, embedding, and drag-and-drop functionality on Windows 95 and Windows NT 3.5
- Addition of Send command in File menu for simple-mail-enable support
- Proper setup and uninstall capabilities
- Improved support for 16-bit scanning modules & 16-bit filter plug-ins on Windows 95
- Support for new TWAIN_32 scanning standard for both 16-bit and 32-bit scanning modules
- New GIF89a export plug-in with transparency and interlacing support
- Optimizations for multi-processing under Windows NT
- Support for new Wacom UltraPen eraser
- Latest version 3.0.2 of Adobe Type Manager
- Full Version Only: Latest version 2.1 of Adobe Acrobat Reader on Deluxe CD-ROM
- Full Version Only: Addition of Adobe PhotoShop Windows SDK and other information on Deluxe CD-ROM for developers interested in developing plug-ins

for Adobe PhotoShop and other Adobe applications.

Customers in the US/Canada

The full upgrade to version 3.0.5 from previous versions of 3.0 is available for US\$19.95 on CD-ROM or US\$29.95 on CD-ROM plus 3.5" disks.

The full upgrade to version 3.0.5 from versions earlier than 3.0.x is available for US\$179 on CD-ROM plus 3.5" disks.

The full upgrade to version 3.0.5 from PhotoShop LE or PhotoStyler is available for US\$249 on CD-ROM plus 3.5" disks.

For more information on upgrading to version 3.0.5 or to place an order, contact Adobe at 1-800-521-1976
Customers Outside the US/Canada

For more information on upgrading to version 3.0.5 or to place an order, contact your local Adobe distributor or call Adobe at 206-628-2749.

Customers in Europe

For more information on upgrading to version 3.0.5 or to place an order, contact your nearest Adobe support center:

February 2, 1996 Country Contact Numbers

Austria 44 131 451 6882
Belgium 44 131 451 6883
Denmark 45 48 14 25 11
Finland 358 0 546 300
France 44 131 451 6889

Germany 44 131 451 6884
 Iceland 354 1 681 666
 Iceland 354 511 5111
 Rep. of Ireland 44 131 451 6888
 Italy 44 131 451 6890
 The Netherlands 44 131 451 6885
 Norway 47 22 90 05 00
 Portugal 1 471 67 63
 Spain 93 423 67 67
 Sweden 44 131 451 6886
 Switzerland 44 131 458 6887
 UK 0131 451 6888
 US 206 628 2749

SCANNER Evaluations STR Focus

A LOOK AT SCANNERS

Courtesy of the Go Graphics Group and the Graphics Supportt Forum on CompuServe

Products:

'• Agfa StudioScan IIsi	(Flatbed color scanner)_Evaluation
'• Canon IX-4015	(Flatbed color scanner)_Evaluation
'• Epson ES-1000C	(Flatbed color
scanner)_Evaluation	
'• HP ScanJet 4c	(Flatbed color scanner)_Evaluation
'• Microtek Lab ScanMaker E3	(Flatbed color
scanner)_Evaluation	
'• Tamarack Technologies ArtiScan Z1-600	(Flatbed color
scanner)_Evaluation	
'• UMAX Technologies Vista-S8 Pro2	(Flatbed color
scanner)_Evaluation	

Umax Technologies' \$845 Umax Vista S8 Pro2 earns top honors in a comparison of six flatbed scanners, with HP's \$1,179 HP ScanJet 4c and Bayer Corp's \$900 Agfa StudioScan IIsi rounding out the top three. The Vista offers a full set of tools, and a split screen allows users to compare potential color and tone edits with the original. Vista's color saturation is good, as are contrast and detail in monochrome images. A sound design and good manual are let down by inadequate customer support. The ScanJet is hampered by a driver that insists on using non-standard terms, but the features are plentiful and context-sensitive help is sound. The ScanJet tops all contenders in interpolation and line resolvability, but color quality is below that of the Vista and StudioScan. StudioScan generally offers the best scan quality, particularly for gray-scale images. The documentation is weak, and customer support is unacceptable.

No software or four-color printer can take the thorns out of a badly scanned image. No amount of money nor any equipment in your shed can bring life to a saturated scan. Do you have what you need to cultivate quality images?

COMPARED:

Agfa StudioScan IIsi
Bayer Corp. (Agfa Division)

Canon IX-4015
Canon Computer Systems Inc.

Epson ES-1000C
Epson America Inc.

HP ScanJet 4c
Hewlett-Packard Co.

Microtek ScanMaker E3
Microtek Lab Inc.

Tamarack ArtiScan Z1-600
Tamarack Technologies Inc.

Umax Vista S8 Pro2
Umax Technologies Inc.

A rose by another name, as the Bard suggested, would smell as sweet. But Shakespeare never had to scan a picture of one accurately into a newsletter, because if he had, he might be calling roses -- and scanners -- a lot of other names, none of them very sweet.

Getting the color right is the toughest job in publishing, and desktop scanners have traditionally not been very capable of it. As recently as a couple of years ago, if you wanted to make sure your red roses didn't look like rotting pomegranates you had to turn to an expensive drum scanner to digitize the image. When we last examined desktop scanners, in September 1992, we found them fully up to the chore of scanning line art and text documents, but they were relatively slow and frequently produced hard-to-correct color casts.

A lot has changed in the past four years, however. The most significant difference is the maximum color depth of the scanners we tested four years ago was 24-bit (16.8 million colors); half the models we tested in this comparison scan at 30 bits (more than 1 billion colors).

Although it's true that the scans are reduced to 24 bits before they are sent from the scanner to your computer, there's still an important advantage to 30-bit scanning: A 30-bit scanner can access the full 30 bits when it performs color correction during the scanning process. That generally results in better color ranges and better defined highlights and shadows than post-scan corrections made with 24-bit data. Further, inevitable "noise" will be recorded in the scanning process. When the 30-bit scanners turn in their 24 bits to the computer, they can chuck out 2 bad bits per color channel, leaving 8 good ones per channel. On the other hand, 24-bit scanners, which also chuck out the noise, have less than 8 bits to turn in, making the final image less than advertised. Marketing hype or fact? According to our panel of judges, some 30-bit machines worked well and some did not; the same was true with the 24-bit machines. The bit density had no automatic effect on the quality of the scans, leading us to believe the marketing departments are leading the engineers on this one.

Some of the new scanners incorporate new cold-cathode fluorescent lamps, which generate a fraction of the heat traditional fluorescent lamps used. They have an estimated life span of more than 10,000 hours, which compares favorably to the 1,000 or so hours you can expect from a standard scanner

lamp. And because the lamps burn cooler, the manufacturer doesn't have to ventilate the insides of the scanner with fans. The result is that the optical elements of a cold-cathode scanner can be sealed to prevent dust from getting inside and dirtying up your scans.

We're also generally impressed with the new TWAIN drivers that accompany many of the scanners. The TWAIN drivers ensure compatibility with any Windows software package, and the features of the drivers vary from scanner to scanner. Both the Vista S8 Pro2, from Umax Technologies Inc., and the ScanMaker E3, from Microtek Lab Inc., came with excellent drivers offering many options and clean designs. The Vista, for example, includes a feature that shows two thumbnail images side by side. The first is the preview of the image and the second shows the proposed changes to color and tint you've asked it to make. Making adjustments in the driver saved us the trouble of opening a full-blown image editor and displaying multiple memory-hungry files.

There is, of course, more to consider than color depth and lamp life in figuring out which scanner is most suitable for your purposes. Our test plan for desktop scanners highlights three other critical areas: scan quality, speed, and accessories.

BLOSSOMING RESOLUTION. Scanner resolution, like that of printers, is often measured in dots per inch (dpi). In actuality, printers print dots and scanners see pixels. Therefore the scanners' optical resolution is most accurately described in pixels per inch (ppi). A 300-ppi scanner will create images from pixels 1/300th of an inch wide. The current crop of desktop scanners offers higher resolutions than the previous generation. True optical resolutions of 600 ppi are becoming standard now, compared to 300 ppi a couple of years ago.

Watch out, however, for vendors' claims of resolutions higher than 1,000 ppi. Desktop scanners costing less than \$1,500, such as those we tested, simply aren't going to deliver true resolutions that high. Most of the scanners in this comparison can, however, simulate higher scan resolutions through interpolation. Interpolation is a process by which the scanner uses an algorithm to mathematically "fill in the gaps" to smooth curves that would otherwise appear jagged. As true optical resolution is predetermined by the scanner's optics any resolution higher than that figure will employ interpolation.

Just how much resolution do you need? For output purposes, you are limited by the capability of the printer. And the most limiting aspect of the printer is its measurement of lines per inch (lpi), which is not readily known by most users because vendors would prefer you know the dpi figure. A good rule of thumb is to scan at roughly two and a half times the screen frequency, or number of lpi, you'll be printing to for a 1-to-1 image. The higher resolution comes in most handy when you want to scan a small area and enlarge it.

INSTANT GARDENS? All of the scanners in this comparison can do full-color scans in a single pass (vs. scanning once each for red, green, and blue channels). But we still found significant differences in speed, with some models taking three to five times longer than others to complete the same scan in our color scanning tests. If you have to scan 50 images in an afternoon, for example, selecting the right scanner may make the difference between finishing work on time or staying well into the evening. And if you're doing extensive document scanning, the differences can be even more crucial, because workloads of hundreds of pages per day aren't uncommon.

Before selecting your new scanner, take a close look at the speed breakdowns in our tests in terms of the type of scanning you'll do. Remember also that the scanner that's fastest at performing color scans is not always the fastest scanner at performing black-and-white scans.

You'll also want to take a close look at what's in the box along with the scanner. A TWAIN driver isn't the only software that you'll find. Most units also ship with some sort of optical character recognition (OCR) and image editing software, which can be important factors, because high-end OCR and image editing software packages can cost about as much as the scanner itself.

More often, however, what you'll find in the box are light versions of a more powerful package, such as Adobe's Systems Inc.'s Photoshop Limited Edition, so you might have to buy the software you need anyway. It's not going to help you to save a few hundred dollars on a scanner if you have to pay an additional \$800 to get the right image editing or text recognition program.

Finally, don't overlook what isn't in the box. None of the scanners in this comparison ship with automatic document feeders or transparency adapters, for example, but most offer these as extra-cost options. A rose might be a rose, but a capable color scanner that can accept a document feeder and that comes bundled with high-quality software -- all for less than \$1,500 -- would definitely smell sweeter than the competition.

Report Card: Desktop color scanners
Agfa StudioScan IIsi
Bayer Corp. (Agfa Division)
Ridgefield Park, N.J.
(800) 685-4271; fax: (508) 658-4193

(Weighting) Performance:

Setup and usability (175) Very Good 131.25 The StudioScan was easy to set up, but a few usability problems kept us from giving it a higher score. The scanner's well-designed, menu-based TWAIN driver made software navigation and option selection simple and quick. A comprehensive information box displays scanner and memory information. Because the preview window has a black background, however, the StudioScan made it somewhat difficult to work with dark images.

Scan speed (100) Very Good 75.00 A strong speed performer, the StudioScan came in first scanning our gray-scale photo; it took a mere 11 seconds. On average, it rated third overall -- but the difference in overall averages among the top four finishers was minimal.

Scan quality (250) Excellent 250.00 The StudioScan performed better than impressively in virtually all our tests of scan quality; it delivered the best scan quality overall. Its handling of our gray-scale photo was tops. It ranked second in line resolvability and interpolation. Color images were appropriately saturated, and the StudioScan ties with the Vista in retaining detail in midtones and highlights. We saw no differences in scans performed 2 hours apart.

Design (100) Good 62.50 The StudioScan's cover is ergonomically designed for easy opening, but is difficult to keep open and somewhat flimsy; its construction is otherwise sturdy. Three rulers along the placement area show different units of measurement. The StudioScan supplies two SCSI ports.

Support and pricing:

Documentation (75) Satisfactory 37.50 Though adequate, Agfa's documentation can't compete with Microtek for scope or HP for readability. Still, glossary and troubleshooting sections are provided. The manuals are shipped shrink-wrapped and unbound, an annoying and cumbersome approach.

Support policies (75) Very Good 56.25 Agfa covers the StudioScan with a one-year warranty. Toll-free support is free and unlimited during the warranty period. Agfa support is available weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. in all time zones. Fax and BBS (toll call) services are available.

Technical support (75) Unacceptable 0.00 Each of the numerous times we called, we were required to leave a message with an automated attendant. Because not a single one of our calls was ever answered, we must consider the quality of Agfa's support unacceptable.

Added value (75) Very Good 56.25 The StudioScan comes with Adobe Systems Inc.'s Photoshop Light Edition and Caere Corp.'s OmniPage Direct for OCR.

Pricing (75) Good 46.87 The StudioScan's street price is \$900. Agfa doesn't supply a list price.

Final score 7.1

Canon IX-4015
Canon Computer Systems Inc.
Costa Mesa, Calif.
(800) 848-4123

(Weighting) Performance:

Setup and usability (175) Satisfactory 87.50 The Canon's setup was a pain, and its TWAIN driver wasn't nearly as rich in features as the ScanMaker or the Vista. The Canon supplies the fewest adjustment options, and the image preview is too small to effectively reflect the changes we did make using them. We couldn't easily resize the cropping marquee. On the plus side, the Canon provides broad help and, as with most of the other scanners, changes we made to our preview image showed up in real time.

Scan speed (100) Very Good 75.00 This solid performer placed second overall in speed -- among a competitive group. It took first-place honors scanning our line art target, with an elapsed time of only 7 seconds. Compare that to the Vista, which took almost 30 seconds.

Scan quality (250) Satisfactory 125.00 The Canon did not impress us in any of our quality tests. Our judges placed it in a tie for sixth (with the ScanMaker) in its handling of line resolvability and interpolation. The color photograph assumed a brownish cast, with details lost in the shadows. Its scan of our gray-scale photo was too dark and lacked contrast. The Canon was consistent in its performance -- we found no difference between scans performed 2 hours apart.

Design (100) Good 62.50 The generally well-designed Canon's petite size makes it handy for use in small areas but limits the size of your scanning media to letter or smaller. The cover stayed open when lifted. Measurement guides are unremarkable, but construction is very sturdy. The Canon supplies two SCSI ports.

Support and pricing:

Documentation (75) Good 46.87 The quick-start guide and users' manual are laid out well for easy navigation, and both books include large helpful illustrations and step-by-step instructions. A troubleshooting section and glossary are provided.

Support policies (75) Excellent 75.00 Canon provides a two-year warranty, with 24-hour replacement guaranteed. Support is free, toll-free, unlimited, and available seven days per week, from 6 a.m. to 12 a.m. Support via fax, BBS (toll call), and CompuServe is also available.

Technical support (75) Satisfactory 37.50 On one call, an automated switchboard informed us that Canon support was very busy, then promptly disconnected our call. However, technicians did go to lengths to make sure our problems were resolved.

Added value (75) Very Good 56.25 The Canon includes the complete Light Source Computer Images Inc.'s Ofoto 2.0 Image editor, OmniPage Direct for OCR, and a copier utility.

Pricing (75) Very Good 56.25 The Canon lists at \$799. Its street price is \$688.

Final score 6.2

Epson ES-1000C
Epson America Inc.
Torrance, Calif.
(800) 289-3776, ext. 3000
World Wide Web: <http://www.epson.com>

(Weighting) Performance:

Setup and usability (175) Very Good 131.25 The Epson was easy to set up. Its driver's feature set was as complete as most of the other scanners'; only a couple of usability issues kept us from giving our full recommendation. We liked the visibility provided by a roomy preview. And we could even generate five separate images to view and compare simultaneously. But the selecting cursor looks like a zoom tool. And, in order to generate an adequately sized image, we had to set zoom before running preview.

Scan speed (100) Good 62.50 On average, the Epson ranked fifth. It virtually tied for first in scanning our line art document, but it consistently hovered in the middle or near the bottom of the pack on the rest of our speed tests.

Scan quality (250) Very Good 187.50 The Epson handled our color image better than any other product tested. Detail was apparent in shadows, and midtones and colors were appropriately saturated. It ran with the middle of the pack on line resolvability and interpolation, as well as gray-scale handling (it lost some shadow detail). Users should make sure the Epson has ample time to warm up, because we saw some differences in scans after a time lapse of 2 hours.

Design (100) Very Good 75.00 The Epson's design is among the sleekest, status indicators are extensive, and construction is solid. The maximum scan area is a smallish 8.5 by 11.67 inches. Its cable, measuring less than 3 feet, limits some flexibility of placement. The unit delivers two SCSI ports.

Support and pricing:

Documentation (75) Satisfactory 37.50 The Epson's shallow setup guide is barely more than a jump start; no troubleshooting information is present. Another, more complete, guide to driver utilities includes troubleshooting tips, but doesn't compare to the ScanJet's or ScanMaker's high standards.

Support policies (75) Very Good 56.25 The Epson is covered by a one-year warranty. Epson provides free, unlimited, and toll-free telephone support weekdays from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Eastern time. Support is also available via a BBS, the Internet, and a fax-back system.

Technical support (75) Unacceptable 0.00 After four days and 20 calls spent trying to reach a technician, we decided our efforts were futile. Busy signals and endless unanswered periods on hold were all we ever got from Epson technical support.

Added value (75) Good 46.87 The Epson comes with Photoshop Lite Edition and Textbridge OCR software.

Pricing (75) Good 46.87 List price for the Epson is \$849; the street price is \$799.

Final score 6.4

HP ScanJet 4c
Hewlett-Packard Co.
Palo Alto, Calif.
(800)-SCANJET
World Wide Web: <http://www.hp.com>

(Weighting) Performance:

Setup and usability (175) Good 109.37 Had we rated the ScanJet on features and help alone, it would have received a higher score, but we couldn't get used to its driver. The driver uses its own dialect -- the industry-standard graphics term "gamma" becomes "emphasis," for example. These departures might leave users out in the cold when seeking assistance from more traditional materials. Still, the ScanJet doesn't shirk on features, and its context-sensitive help is fully illustrated.

Scan speed (100) Good 62.50 Although producing acceptable times, the ScanJet wasn't a standout. It ranked third on our single-page test, but it took almost 43 seconds to scan our color photograph -- more than twice as long as the Vista. Overall, the ScanJet ranked sixth.

Scan quality (250) Very Good 187.50 The ScanJet captured subtleties well in highlights and midtones. And in line resolvability and interpolation, our judges were unanimous that it could not be beat. For text-only applications, the ScanJet is a superlative choice. The unit's handling of gray scale was also admirable, second only to the StudioScan. The ScanJet demonstrated no problems with color consistency. One black mark: Its color quality wasn't of the caliber of the Vista, the Epson, or StudioScan.

Design (100) Good 62.50 The ScanJet's design is clean, simple, and solid, but the power light (the unit's only indicator) should be more visible. Maximum scan area is a relatively generous 8.5 by 14 inches, and the removable cover facilitates the scanning of odd-shaped materials. There are no ruler guides. Two SCSI ports are provided.

Support and pricing:

Documentation (75) Very Good 56.25 High-quality documentation is the norm from HP, and the ScanJet's two users' guides do not disappoint. They're complete, comprehensible enough for the beginner, and informative enough for the expert. The manual's large illustrations are a plus.

Support policies (75) Excellent 75.00 HP covers the ScanJet with a one-year warranty. Free, unlimited, and toll-free support is available weekdays, 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mountain time. Support via fax, BBS, Internet, and CD-ROM is also available.

Technical support (75) Very Good 56.25 Although calls weren't answered directly by technicians, once we reached the support staff, we were treated like long-lost friends. Help was thorough and courteous, explanations were detailed, and most importantly, our problems were remedied.

Added value (75) Very Good 56.25 The ScanJet has Corel Corp.'s PhotoPaint (PCs) or Adobe Photoshop LE (Macs), and Caere OmniPage Lite.

Pricing (75) Good 46.87 HP lists the ScanJet at \$1,179. \$995 is the street price.

Final score 7.1

Microtek ScanMaker E3
Microtek Lab Inc.
Redondo Beach, Calif.
(800) 654-4160; fax: (310) 297-5050

(Weighting) Performance:

Setup and usability (175) Excellent 175.00 Setting up and using the ScanMaker was like a ride in First Class. No other scanner was this easy. Its very usable driver is virtually a miniature image editor; the software offers nearly twice the average number of features provided by the scanners in our comparison. Previewed images were clear, and the viewing space was ample. It was a pleasure to experiment, and the reset feature let us undo any or all of our changes. On-screen help is easy to navigate.

Scan speed (100) Satisfactory 50.00 The ScanMaker pulled up the rear, coming in last in four of our five speed tests. It took a little more than a minute to scan our color photo (which the Vista scanned in less than half the time). Still, it's fast enough for general business use.

Scan quality (250) Satisfactory 125.00 The ScanMaker's performance compares as badly as the Canon's in line resolvability and interpolation: they tied for sixth. Its handling of color images was only average, with colors appearing oversaturated; midtone and shadows retained more detail than highlight areas. The ScanMaker's scan of our gray-scale photo turned out too light and lacking in contrast. We found no problems with color consistency among scans performed 2 hours apart.

Design (100) Satisfactory 50.00 The ScanMaker provides the basics, but its overall design could be better. The scanner doesn't terminate internally and Microtek doesn't provide a SCSI terminator. The maximum document scanning area is 8.5 by 14 inches. Two SCSI ports are provided. We had to hold open

the cover with our heads.

Support and pricing:

Documentation (75) Very Good 56.25 The ScanMaker's comprehensive and informative documentation is a veritable textbook on scanning. But its step-by-step format makes it remarkably easy to use. Its one failing is that it covers too many scanner models at once.

Support policies (75) Good 46.87 Microtek provides a one-year parts and labor warranty. Telephone support is free and unlimited on a toll line. E-mail, fax, and BBS (toll call) support is offered. Support hours are weekdays from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pacific time.

Technical support (75) Poor 18.75 Reaching technical support was as difficult as trying to get Streisand tickets. Obstructions included busy signals and bizarre recorded messages such as the enigmatic "Thank you and good-bye," followed by disconnection. Our questions were handled adequately.

Added value (75) Good 46.87 The ScanMaker provides its own complete ImageStarII image editor, and Caere's OmniPage Lite Edition.

Pricing (75) Excellent 75.00 The ScanMaker is street priced at \$399. Microtek doesn't supply a list price.

Final score 6.4

Tamarack ArtiScan Z1-600
Tamarack Technologies Inc.
Orange, Calif.
(714) 744-3979; fax: (714) 744-4582
World Wide Web: <http://www.tamaracktechnologies.com>

(Weighting) Performance:

Setup and usability (175) Good 109.37 The ArtiScan has a few usability highlights, but its driver software is generally unremarkable. We appreciated the straightforward design of the driver interface. A unique freehand selector is good for cropping irregular columns of text. But we didn't like the fact that to change gamma we had to use a slider bar (instead of directly manipulating a standard curve). Lame help can't be called more than a glorified table of contents.

Scan speed (100) Very Good 75.00 The ArtiScan ran first overall among a fairly consistent pack. Thirty-three seconds was how long it took to scan our magazine photo (The Epson and ScanMaker both took twice as long).

Scan quality (250) Satisfactory 125.00 The ArtiScan choked on our line resolvability and interpolation tests, ranking last. Surprisingly, the line art generated using highest interpolated resolution was of no higher quality than line art generated at the highest optical resolution. The ArtiScan handled reproduction of our color image fairly well, with the exception that output lacked punch in bright areas. It produced an average grayscale image. We identified no color consistency problems.

Design (100) Very Good 75.00 The ArtiScan's overall construction is solid. Although it's second only to the Canon in compactness, it is designed to readily accommodate odd-shaped documents. The ArtiScan offers two SCSI connections. It comes with a built-in SCSI terminator for the Mac and an external one for the PC.

Support and pricing:

Documentation (75) Poor 18.75 We can only call it a "documentation don't." Tamarack's uninviting documentation reads and is laid out like a novel. Worse, some examples and illustrations are of a scanner that isn't the ArtiScan. There's no glossary or index, either.

Support policies (75) Very Good 56.25 Tamarack provides a two-year parts and labor warranty and a money-back guarantee. Telephone support is free and unlimited (weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pacific time). Support is also available via the Internet, fax, and BBS.

Technical support (75) Good 46.87 To our delight, reaching technical support was a piece of cake -- our calls were answered immediately. Explanations were correct and to the point; technicians did not go out of their way to elaborate.

Added value (75) Very Good 56.25 The ArtiScan includes Photoshop Lite Edition, complete Image Recognition Integrated Systems' Read Iris OCR, and an Internet Starter Pack.

Pricing (75) Excellent 75.00 The ArtiScan, although listing for \$649, has a street price of \$499.

Final score 6.3

Umax Vista S8 Pro2
Umax Technologies Inc.
Fremont, Calif.
(800) 562-0311; fax: (510) 651-8834
World Wide Web: <http://www.umax.com>

(Weighting) Performance:

Setup and usability (175) Excellent 175.00 What can we say but, "Wow"? A complete set of tools coupled with a sleek driver made scanning fun. A neat split screen let us preview changes to color and tone, alongside the original. Presets were helpful but not limiting; we could also make custom settings if we chose. Help includes illustrative screen shots. A unique uninstall feature let us easily remove the driver as necessary.

Scan speed (100) Very Good 75.00 The Vista came in, on average, a close fourth among the top four contenders. It placed first in our color photo, color magazine image, and text tests, but took the most time to scan our line art and gray-scale documents.

Scan quality (250) Very Good 187.50 Our judges were impressed with the Vista's color reproduction and quality. Like the StudioScan, it produced well-saturated color, while retaining detail in highlight and midtone areas. The Vista's handling of the gray-scale photo was also impressive; not quite as attractive as the StudioScan's and the ScanJet's output, it had just the right amount of contrast and detail. The Vista did a solid job on our line resolvability and interpolation tests.

Design (100) Very Good 75.00 The Vista's design is elegant and ergonomically sound. Scanning odd-shaped documents is a breeze because the cover can be removed. An appropriately sized SCSI (it has two SCSI ports) cable meant we could place the scanner elsewhere besides directly next to our machine.

Support and pricing:

Documentation (75) Good 46.87 The users' guide and operational manual are invitingly designed and usefully illustrated. Extras include a glossary and maintenance and troubleshooting sections. But the Vista's documentation isn't nearly as comprehensive as the ScanMaker's.

Support policies (75) Very Good 56.25 A one-year warranty covers the Vista. Telephone support is free, unlimited, and toll free. Support can also be had via fax, BBS (toll call), and the World Wide Web. Support hours are 6 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Pacific time.

Technical support (75) Poor 18.75 During one call, we were put on hold, then we found ourselves talking to another waiting customer. Other calls to Umax's inadequate technical support center weren't even answered by a human.

Added value (75) Excellent 75.00 The Vista provides a complete edition of Photoshop, Maxsoft-Ocron OCR, and CD titles.

Pricing (75) Good 46.87 The Vista lists for \$845 retail, and \$779 on the street.

Final score 7.5

TOUCH OF GRAY

In theory, scanners should be able to capture 256 values of gray. In reality, none do. But that won't cause a production bottleneck, because even high-end printers can't capture the full gray gamut. And indeed, some perceptual research shows that people can't even perceive that many shades. Many professional designers limit themselves to just about a hundred values.

DON'T SAVE IT FOR LATER

There are two good reasons to use a scanner's built-in preview software to make changes in preview mode before finally scanning an image into your image editing program.

First, you save time because you don't have to wait for your imaging application to load before modifying your picture.

Second, once you've made two significant changes to an image from within an image editor -- adjusting a color channel and shifting gamma, for example -- the fundamental quality of your image will begin to degrade.

STRAIGHT UP

You don't need to be a Rembrandt or an Einstein to generate accurate color scans. Most desktop scanners pay heed to this creed, supplying -- along with a range of sophisticated editing tools -- an Auto feature for creating quality scans without much user intervention. Indeed, in generating output to evaluate, we relied on Auto capability and didn't adjust the scanner at all. Happily, this generated positive results overall.

COMMUNICATION BREAKDOWN: Scans in the Place Where You Live

Multifunction devices such as Xerox Corp.'s Desktop Document Systems' Document WorkCenter 250 provide scanning, copying, and faxing services in one package. Although they're typically targeted for SOHO use, some manufacturers are promoting such devices for use in workgroup environments.

Corporate users should consider the service implications of such a solution, however. If a unit goes out for repair for the scanner component, the whole department loses access to copier and scanner as well. And guess who gets blamed for that?

TWO TO TANGO

Scanners can't bear the whole burden for the final quality of scanned material; the capabilities of your output devices are equally important. Mileage will vary considerably, for example, based on whether you print to a midrange laser or high-end dye-sublimation printer.

Related Article: RESULTS AT A GLANCE

With the burgeoning of the World Wide Web, the increasing accuracy of optical character recognition (OCR) software, and the emergence of viable document management tools, scanners are fast becoming as necessary to today's enterprises as fax machines and E-mail. Color desktop flatbed scanners -- simple to configure, compact, and (in theory, at least) as easy to use as a copy machine -- are the natural choice for general business users.

We evaluated seven popular brands priced at less than \$1,500. Results spanned the spectrum, from two bargain-priced units that showed, when it comes to output, you get what you pay for, to the priciest model whose not-quite-ideal results proceeded to disprove that adage.

To our dismay, our experiences with almost every vendor's technical support were among the worst we've suffered through. Shabby service that included disconnections, chronic busy signals, unanswered phones, and inept answers lowered the scores of several contenders -- including the Epson, an otherwise solid choice.

Still, the midpriced Vista S8 Pro2, from Umax Technologies Inc., offered an elegant driver and produced sterling output. The unit provides a strong combination of accuracy, usability, and design elegance, complemented by a rich cache of value-adding software; we appreciated that its sleek driver was not only full featured but also easy to understand and navigate.

The StudioScan IIsi, from Bayer Corp.'s Agfa Division, whose comprehensive driver more than made the grade when it came to usability, produced the most impressive output overall and was speedier on average than the Vista. Its poorly packaged documentation, however, is just so-so.

We think Hewlett-Packard Co.'s ScanJet 4c would be a fantastic choice for OCR and other text-based applications, because it handled our line art tests the best. But in color reproduction it can't compete with the Vista, StudioScan, or the Epson. (The Epson in particular handled color with remarkable aplomb.) Worth noting (although this didn't affect the scanner's overall score) is that we were unable to scan directly into Photoshop, Version 3.04, using the ScanJet's 32-bit driver on Windows 3.1.

Epson America Inc.'s ES-1000C ran the gamut of category scores, but the end result was a middling finish. It came through for us in performance -- in fact, its handling of color was unparalleled. Also, its very usable driver boasts features none of its competition can match, including the capability to display as many as five independently adjustable versions of the same image at once. It ran with the pack in speed. And we only know its technical support in the breach: We were never even able to reach a technician.

We loved the Microtek Lab Inc. ScanMaker E3's driver front end. Chock full of

options but not too easy to get lost in, it saved us the trouble of having to open and reopen our image editor to make multiple adjustments to our images. Unfortunately, the kludgy design of the unit and the marginal quality of its scans didn't live up to the standard set by its terrific software.

Tamarack Technologies Inc.'s bargain-priced ArtiScan Z1-600 also failed to impress with its scan quality, although its output was within the bounds of acceptable. Its variety of cropping tools provided some additional flexibility not offered by other drivers.

The IX-4015, from Canon Computer Systems Inc., performed barely satisfactorily in scan quality; it not only infused our color photo with a pronounced cast, but it inverted bit maps when scanned into Photoshop. The Canon does, however, include a complete image editor and OCR package (not all the units we saw do), and it sports an attractive price tag as well.

The Score

Umax Vista S8 Pro2	7.5	
HP ScanJet 4c		7.1
Agfa StudioScan IIsi	7.1	
Epson ES-1000C	6.4	
Microtek ScanMaker E3	6.4	
Tamarack ArtiScan Z1-600	6.3	
Canon IX-4015	6.2	

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File format Requirements for Articles

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All articles submitted to STReport for publication must be sent in the following format. Please use the format requested. Any files received that do not conform will not be used. The article must be in an importable word processor format for Word 7.0.. The margins are .05" left and 1.0" Monospaced fonts are not to be used. Please use proportional fonting only and at eleven points.

- '• No Indenting on any paragraphs!!
- '• No underlining!
- '• Column Format shall be achieved through the use of tabs only. Do NOT use the space bar.
- '• No ASCII "ART"!!
- '• There is no limits as to size, articles may be split into two if lengthy
- '• Actual Artwork should be in GIF, PCX, JPG, TIF, BMP, WMF file formats
- '• Artwork (pictures, graphs, charts, etc.) should be sent along with the article separately
- '• Please use a single font only in an article. TTF CG Times 11pt. is preferred. (VERY Strong Hint)

If there are any questions please use either E-Mail or call.

On another note. the ASCII version of STReport is fast approaching the "end of the line" As the major Online Services move away from ASCII.. So shall STReport. All in the name of progress and improved readability. The

amount of reader mail expressing a preference for our Adobe PDF enhanced issue is running approximately 15 to 1 over the ASCII edition. Besides, STReport will not be caught in the old, worn out "downward compatibility dodge" we must move forward.

Many grateful thanks in advance for your enthusiastic co-operation.

Ralph F. Mariano, Editor
STReport International Online Magazine

AWARD BIOS NEWS STR Spotlight

"The Best Keeps Getting Better!"

Award Software International
Windows 95 Technical Bulletin

February, 1996

Award Web site up! (<http://www.award.com>)

Award Software has determined there is nothing wrong with any of our Generic core BIOS and Windows 95. There are some motherboards and BIOS that come from specific OEMS that do have problems. These motherboards represent a very small percentage of our BIOS.

If you experience any of the following problems, try to contact your motherboard or System OEM directly. If you do not know your motherboard manufacturer, or you cannot contact anyone who knows anything about your system or motherboard, contact Award for more information. There is OEM contact information and Award information in this message.

Known Problem List:

#1 Can't turn off virus protection in BIOS setup menu

Basically, boot sector writes are not possible in Windows 95 unless you turn off this feature in the BIOS setup menu. If you cannot turn it off in the BIOS setup menu, see the workaround.

#2 IDE Address Conflict w/Floppy Disk controller

We misreport I/O address 3F6 as belonging to the Hard drive and it really should be reported as belonging to the floppy. This affects the performance as Windows 95 will not load the 32 bit drivers but instead relies on the older 16 bit interface. The devices still work, but slower.

#3 Plug and Play functionality misreported

Even though its a plug and play BIOS, it doesn't work with Windows 95.

#4 System Registry write problems

During setup, and during subsequent system boots, Windows 95 tries to rewrite the BIOS portion of the system registry and fails.

#5 Power Management problems (lock ups with APM turned on, etc)

#6 System instabilities and Intel Triton Motherboards

This problem manifests itself as hard disk access problems, including disk resident system registry problems.

#7 Hot boot/warm boot differences

If the system doesn't boot into Windows 95 after a cold boot, but requires a warm boot (i.e. it hangs into the cold boot), you have this problem.

These generic errors have been traced to our BIOS. If you own one of these motherboards please contact your dealer or OEM for an upgrade. If you cannot contact your dealer or OEM, please contact Award for support.

Possible work arounds:

Item #1:

Run setup /ir for windows 95. Create an emergency disk. Boot up on the emergency disk after loading win95. Run
sys c:, remove the emergency disk, and reboot. You should now be booting Win95 off of the hard disk!

Item #2:

Contact Award via email. You need to upgrade your BIOS.

Item #3:

Setup Windows 95 with the "setup /P i" option. This will turn off plug and play. To turn it back on after you upgrade your bios, run setup with "setup /P j".

Note case and space are significant!

Item #4:

You need to upgrade your BIOS. Contact your OEM or Award.

Item #5:

Turn off power management at BIOS setup.

Item #6:

Award now has the Bus Master drivers from Intel. Please send your BIOS serial number (bottom of screen after power on, during memory count up, should start with a date, chipset, 2xxxxxxx) to bmide@award.com. Specify OS/2, Windows 95 or Windows NT. You will receive a set of drivers via return email. DO NOT CALL TECH SUPPORT AT AWARD!

Item #7:

You need a new BIOS. Contact your OEM or Award.

Notes from Symantec

Symantec recommends deleting all old software before reinstalling the new Windows 95 software, especially a file called SYMEVNT.386. This windows driver causes problems in Windows 95. This file must be from the Windows 95 release dated 8/8/95 or later to work under Windows 95. Symantec recommends turning off Autoprotect in the AntiVirus program.

Please, if your system works reliably in Safe Mode, the odds of having a BIOS

problem is very low. When Win95 is running normally, the BIOS is only used for Plug and Play functions and Power Management. Very little of the BIOS is used any other time by Win95.

NOW AVAILABLE ON BBS and WWW site: Free!

Documentation on Award BIOS Chipset Setup.

See the "manuals" area on our BBS or the Docs section in the web site for more information.

Here is the most current list of OEM contact info:

Asustek
408 956 9077
408 956 9084 (BBS)
<http://asustek.asus.com.tw>

FIC
510 252 7777
<http://www.fic.com.tw>

Gigabyte
818 854 9338

DFI
916 568 1234

ECS
510 226 7333
510 226 7350 (fax)

Soyo
818 330 1712
<http://www.surfusa.com/mbs/soyo>

Pronix (Epox)
714 990 8858

Tyan
<http://www.tyan.com>

Many of our other OEMs are in the process of adding web sites, so you should search for a web site for these or other OEMs.

Here is a current list of known BIOS with the problems.

Virus Protection:
2A5L7F09
214X2002
2C403AB1
2A5L7F09
2C419S23

Floppy/IDE conflict:
2A59CB09
2A5UNMZE

Misreporting or bad Plug and Play:
2A5L7F09

2A5197000
2A51CJ3A
2A5L7F0HC
2A59CF54C

The BIOS serial number appears at the bottom of the screen after power on during memory count up. The PAUSE key should work at that point, to allow you to read your serial number. The other numbers and letters in the serial number refer to chipset and OEM info.

Award asks all of its customers to try the following before contacting Award with Win95 questions and problems:

- '• Boot Dos/Windows 3.1
- '• Run scandisk /f. If scandisk has problems, fix them before proceeding.
DO NOT PROCEED UNTIL SCANDISK RUNS PERFECTLY.
- '• Run a virus scan program and eliminate any virus found.
- '• Also, if you have any hardware you aren't using, now is a good time to remove it.
- '• Rename autoexec.bat and config.sys autoexec.old and config.old
- '• Copy your win95 CDRom to a subdirectory on the hard disk.
- '• reboot to DOS only
- '• Run setup from the hard disk. DO NOT OVERWRITE the old Windows directory. You will have to reload all of your applications.
- '• Reboot under Windows 95.

If Windows 95 works, and all the devices under the device manager in the system icon are correct and do not have yellow or red circles, you are done. DO NOT RELOAD 16 bit legacy drivers unless Win95 DID NOT recognize that device at all, and be warned that if that is the case, your driver may not work and cause system instability.

If Windows 95 incorrectly identifies a device but functions correctly, you are OK. However, if Windows 95 incorrectly identifies a device and is unstable or non functional, you MUST REPLACE THE HARDWARE. DO NOT LOAD THE LEGACY DRIVER! It is a waste of time and effort. Windows 95 will continue to use the wrong driver, and if you delete the driver from the hard disk, it will prompt you to reload it from CD!

If after all this, you still have problems with Win95, please reboot, use the F8 key, and try to create a bootlog.txt file.

The contents of this file, autoexec.bat, config.sys and the BIOS serial # will be needed by tech support. Please email or fax all the information to us here at Award.

Contact info:

PLEASE do NOT contact Award Software in Munich, Germany for technical support. They are not able to offer BIOS technical support at this time. Award Software in Mountain View, California is the only Award BIOS technical support office.

Award Software
777 East Middlefield Road
Mountain View, CA 94043-4023
(415) 968 4433
(415) 968 0274 (fax)
(415) 968 0249 (BBS)
<http://www.award.com>

email: support@award.com

If you have any questions, contact technical support via email. This is a very efficient way for us to handle the large number of queries. Phone calls work, too, but be warned you will probably get voice mail.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Maurice Bizzarri
Vice President, Engineering
Award Software International, Inc.

A T T E N T I O N-A T T E N T I O N-A T T E N T I O N

FARGO PRIMERA PRO COLOR PRINTERS - 600DPI

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Visa Moves To Intranet System

MAJOR TELECOM BILL PASSED BY CONGRESS

Major telecommunications legislation, passed last week by both houses of Congress and certain to be signed by the President, is expected to transform the long-distance and local-service telephone carriers, the cable TV operators, and the electric utilities, all of which now will be able to compete against each other with relatively few restrictions. Expected to herald an age of innovative new products and services, the legislation has been hailed enthusiastically by almost every segment of the communications industry, though it is being criticized by consumer groups, which predict rising prices for cable and phone services, and by civil liberties groups, which say the bill's penalties for using the Internet to distribute "indecent material" to minors represent an abridgment of the constitutional right to free speech. (New York Times 2 Feb 96 p1)

BROADCASTERS GET SPECTRUM FOR DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

One of the stumbling blocks to getting passage of the telecom legislation had been the provision to give broadcasters a portion of the airwaves for use in developing digital services (such as interactive television), because the

provision had been criticized by Senator Dole and others as a "giveaway" of valuable spectrum that could be auctioned off for tens of millions of dollars on the open market. However, the debate over that provision has been deferred to the future, so the broadcasters are happy. They are also happy that the legislation will raise from 25% to 35% the limit on how many of the country's homes can be reached with the stations they own, and by the fact that the bill makes it now possible for broadcasters to own cable systems. (New York Times 2 Feb 96 C4)

SPINDLER REPLACED BY AMELIO AT APPLE

Yielding to pressure from investors angry about the company's battered state, Apple's board of directors has ousted Michael Spindler and replaced him with Gilbert F. Amelio as chief executive officer. To take the position, Amelio resigned as president and CEO of National Semiconductor. A company that he has been credited with "turning around." (Wall Street Journal 2 Feb 96 A3)

ANOTHER GLOBAL TELECOM ALLIANCE

Telecommunications companies Deutsche Telekom, FranceTelecom and Sprint are forming an alliance called Global One in order to provide worldwide voice, data and video services for corporate clients; international consumer services (such as calling cards); and international transmission and support to other international carriers. Global One will be competing against two previously formed global alliances: Uniworld, formed by AT&T and four European telecom operators; and Concert, formed by British Telecommunications and Sprint. (Financial Times 1 Feb 96 p16)

AMERICA ONLINE ADDED TO GERMAN INTERNET INVESTIGATION

America Online says that AOL Europe, which it runs jointly with Bertelsmann AG, has become part of a probe by some German prosecutors of anti-Semitic and neo-Nazi mail on the Internet. CompuServe and a European online service already have been questioned by the investigators. (Atlanta Journal-Constitution 3 Feb 96 D3)

JAPANESE COMPANIES PREPARE ASSAULT ON U.S. PC MARKET

Toshiba is moving beyond the laptop into the U.S. desktop market, with a new line of home PC models scheduled for the fourth quarter of 1996, in time for Christmas sales. Sony and Hitachi both have declared their intentions to market to U.S. consumers, and Fujitsu is expected to make a similar announcement. Toshiba currently holds a 20% market share in the U.S. notebook market, and the company's PC division general manager says he wants Toshiba to be the world's fifth-largest PC maker by 1998, and the third largest by 2000, up from No. 9 today. (Wall Street Journal 2 Feb 96 B4)

DEAD INFORMATION ON THE WEB

Futurist Paul Saffo predicts the transformation of the Web in the next 12 months: "The Web as we know it today is dead. It's dead in two ways: because it's going to mutate into something else very quickly and be unrecognizable within 12 months, and secondly, it's dead because all it's got on it is dead information... Sure, there are links, but the links just lead to more dead information. It's a big information mausoleum. But with things like Java, you get animation. The information is alive... Today, if you think about it, it's really quite bizarre. You dial into a Web page. There may be a thousand other people at that page. But the only way that you even know anyone else is there is that the server is slow. The next big change is going to be finding ways to put qualities that we associate with MUDs today into Web pages so that you can interact with people." (Upside Feb 96 p26)

ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT

The Canadian government is planning a system that will let citizens conduct

all their government business over open computer networks. The first stage of the multi-year effort is a \$7-million project to design an electronic lock and key system so that any electronic dealings will not jeopardize the security of Ottawa's data bases or violate individual privacy. (Toronto Globe & Mail 2 Feb 96 B22)

PLAYER DROPS OUT OF DIRECT-TO-HOME TV MARKET

Power DirecTV is dropping its plans to launch a direct-to-home satellite service in Canada, citing the excessive costs of government regulations, the growing number of Canadians turning to unlicensed American systems in the "gray market," and the high cost of transmitting specialty and pay-TV channels. (Toronto Financial Post 2 Feb 96 p3)

"EVERYONE REMAIN CALM"

The Denver-Rocky Mountain News reports that management at the new \$5-billion Denver airport forgot to install an intercom system for the subways that trundle passengers from concourse to concourse, so when the computer controlling the subways broke down, there was no way to communicate with the trapped passengers. The city has now rectified the situation by purchasing six electronic bullhorns. (Telecommunications Policy Report 28 Jan 96 p10)

BYE BYE BLACKBIRD

Microsoft Corp. will halt work on its Blackbird software, which would have enabled independent companies to create proprietary information content for the Microsoft Network. Microsoft's online service strategy has increasingly shifted toward the Web, and away from the idea of proprietary content. The company now plans a new version of Blackbird called Internet Studio, which will be compatible with standard Web format. Some MSN content providers weren't too happy with the announcement: "It's catastrophic," says one. "It's one thing to migrate the technology and it's another to abandon it." (Wall Street Journal 5 Feb 96 B3)

CHINA ISSUES NEW NETWORK REGISTRATION RULES

Chinese officials have issued a new requirement that all computer networks register with the government, in addition to outlawing computer pornography and political content. The move comes on the heels of a freeze on new Internet accounts that was implemented at the beginning of the year. The new rules also require high technical standards for Internet access providers. Under the new arrangement, all international Internet access must be done through the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications. China currently has an estimated 50,000 Internet users who will be affected by the new regulations. (New York Times 5 Feb 96 A1)

INTEL RIVALS PLAN P-RATING

Advanced Micro Devices, Cyrix Corp., IBM Microelectronics and SGS Thompson Microelectronics have initiated a rating system for microprocessors based on relative PC performance levels, not just the "clock" speed of the chip measured in megahertz. The new system, called the P-rating, was endorsed as the "first comprehensive and credible method for comparing competing processors" by the publisher of the Microprocessor Newsletter. (Investor's Business Daily 5 Feb 96 A8)

COLLEGES WORRY ABOUT NEW LIABILITY FOR INTERNET CONTENT

The recent passage of the telecommunications reform bill has some college administrators worried over new liability issues for educational institutions that might unknowingly make "indecent" material available to minors through their Internet access operations. In addition, they've expressed concern over potential First Amendment violations if they censor the content too heavily. "We have programs on campus about date rape, unwanted pregnancy, and reproductive- health options, so I don't see how we'd

tolerate censorship of that kind of information in the electronic format," says the head of telecommunications at Carnegie Mellon University. (Chronicle of Higher Education 9 Feb 96 A23)

JUSTICE DEPT. SCRUTINIZES MICROSOFT, VERMEER DEAL

The Justice Department is focusing on Microsoft again, this time with regard to its planned acquisition of closely held Vermeer Technologies, Inc. Vermeer's CEO says he believes the inquiries are "not exceptional at this point." Vermeer's FrontPage software enables people to create and manage Web sites without needing a lot of programming expertise. The sticking point, as far as Justice is concerned, seems to be "whether it is anticompetitive to extend a monopoly from one market to another," says an antitrust lawyer who worked on an earlier Microsoft investigation. (Wall Street Journal 6 Feb 96 B5)

DIGITAL'S STRONGARM CHIP

Digital Equipment Corp. has unveiled its StrongARM microprocessing chip, which it hopes will serve as the foundation for low-cost Internet terminals, interactive video games, cellular phones and hand-held computers. Oracle Corp., which currently is developing an inexpensive Internet appliance, is exploring the option of using Digital's chip in its device. "StrongARM represents the kind of technology that will put a web appliance within the reach of the mass-consumer market," says Oracle's VP of network computing. The new chip is priced at \$29 and runs on AA batteries. (Wall Street Journal 5 Feb 96 B3)

PRODIGY LOWBALLS THE INTERNET

Prodigy Services is launching a new marketing experiment, offering Internet service at a measly \$1 an hour to new subscribers in the metropolitan New York area. The company hopes to expand the offer nationally later this spring, and also plans to start a partnership program that would allow other companies to use the Prodigy network to brand their own Internet access services. "We want to line up a lot of companies to third-party market this for us," says a Prodigy VP. (Wall Street Journal 5 Feb 96 B3)

PATENT MEDICINE FOR APPLE?

Apple may have its share of financial woes right now, but in the patent department it's No. 1. In 1995, Apple Computer acquired 53 patents, compared to Microsoft's 39, Sun Microsystems' 23, Borland's 10, Wang's 7, Oracle's 3, Novell's 3, Lotus's 3 and Intuit's 1. A total of 6,142 software patents were issued in 1995, up from 4,569 the previous year, with networking software the largest category. (Information Week 29 Jan 96 p10)

SPEEDIER GRAPHICS ON COMMERCIAL SERVICES

Tired of watching the hourglass, waiting for those fancy graphics to download? America Online, CompuServe and Prodigy all plan to do something about it. Prodigy's Web browser allows users to interact immediately with text material while graphics download in the background, and AOL has announced a similar product for release sometime this year. The upgrade will not affect Internet use, however. CompuServe's approach involves fewer graphics in the first place: "Is it more important that operations take half as long or have twice as many pretty pictures?" asks a CompuServe spokesman. "What we hear is that people don't want to wait." (St. Petersburg Times 5 Feb 96 p15)

ANOTHER GLOBAL TELECOM ALLIANCE

Telecommunications companies Deutsche Telekom, France Telecom, and Sprint are forming an alliance called Global One in order to provide worldwide voice, data and video services for corporate clients; international consumer services (such as calling cards); and international transmission and

support to other international carriers. Global One will be competing against two previously formed global alliances: Uniworld, formed by AT&T and four European telecom operators; and Concert, formed by British Telecommunications and MCI. (Financial Times 1 Feb 96 p16; corrected from Edupage 4 Feb 96)

APPLE PRICE CUTS AND REBATES

Apple is cutting the prices of its consumer-oriented Macintosh Performa computers by as much as 12% and is extending a rebate program on printers and monitors. The company also announced it is developing a version of the Linux operating system which will run along with the Macintosh operating system on a single machine. <<http://www.mklinux.apple.com>> (New York Times 6 Feb 96 C6)

ANOTHER ROUND OF "NAME THAT COMMUNICATIONS COMPANY!"

The name "Lucent" has been chosen for the spinoff of AT&T's \$20 billion phone equipment business because "it suggests clarity of thought, purpose and vision, and had a technological feel," according to the AT&T director who will become CEO of the new company. (Atlanta Journal-Constitution 6 Feb 96 D3)

EDUPAGE IN LITHUANIAN

We are pleased to announce a Lithuanian edition of Edupage, which will be produced and distributed by the Open Society Fund of Lithuania, in Vilnius, Lithuania. Welcome to our Lithuanian readers of Edupage! Sveiki, naujieji Edupage kaitytojai is Lietuvos! To receive the Lithuanian edition of Edupage, send mail to: osflistserv@osf.lt with the message: subscribe edupage-lt. (Besides English, Edupage is now available in French, German, Hebrew, Hungarian, Italian, Lithuanian, Portuguese, Romanian and Spanish editions.)

DEBATE OVER FREE SPEECH ON THE INTERNET

Is the Internet like TV and radio -- or like newspaper and bookstores? Supporters of the anti-"indecent" provision of the major new telecommunications legislation (Edupage 4 Feb 96) think it's more like the broadcast media -- whereas the American Civil Liberties Union and other civil-liberties groups think it's more like print media, and that efforts to restrict free expression on it should be kept to an absolute minimum. At issue the telecom bill's provision that would make it a crime to transmit (or allow to be transmitted) "indecent" material over a computer network to which minors have access. Indecency is defined in the bill as "any comment, request, suggestion, proposal, image or other communication that, in context, depicts or describes, in terms patently offensive as measured by contemporary community standards, sexual or excretory activities or organs." (New York Times 8 Feb 96 A10) In Canada, a committee from the Information Highway Advisory Council is reviewing existing Canadian laws, but there are no plans to follow Washington's example by trying to bring about legislation to regulate adult materials on the Internet. (Toronto Star 7 Feb 96 A10)

ONLINE BILL-PAYING STILL HAS A WAY TO GO

While banks are touting the ease of online bill-paying, the reality is that unless a merchant has installed the equipment necessary for true electronic payments, the online bill-payment companies often end up sending paper checks through overnight mail. "People expect it to be faster and more accurate, but it's put together with chewing gum and baling wire behind the scenes," says the editor of Online Banking Report. The problem is classic chicken-and-egg -- merchants don't want to bother with online systems until more customers use them, and customers won't use them until more merchants are online. (Wall Street Journal 7 Feb 96 B1)

MURDOCH'S NEWS CORPORATION CHANGES ONLINE DIRECTION

Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation is dismissing nearly half of the 515 employees of News Corp Internet, ending development of the company's proprietary online service, and redirecting its focus to the creation of an Internet-based service. The decision is viewed by industry-watchers as an inevitable result of last week's move by MCI to reduce MCI's equity share in the Murdoch venture from 50% to 15% (in order to concentrate its resources on MCI's new partnership with Microsoft Network). The president of the News Corporation's technology group says, "Rupert is still absolutely committed to this being a crucial distribution channel. But we want to invest in where the Internet industry is going, not where the online industry has been." (New York Times 8 Feb 96 C1)

COPYRIGHT IN THE DIGITAL AGE

The European Film Companies Alliance -- founded by PolyGram and including such other leading European film companies as Bertelsmann, Chargeurs, Ciby 2000, Rank, RCS, and Sopgepaq -- wants the European Union to take a lead in promoting the development of technical systems capable of protecting intellectual property rights and controlling reproduction and distribution of digital information. The Alliance is also seeking adjustments to copyright law, and PolyGram general counsel says, "The bottom line is that unless we are guaranteed a return on our investment by a carefully constructed system of copyright law, it is pointless our investing in what is an extremely risky business." (Financial Times 6 Feb 96 p11)

US SAYS CANADIAN BROADCAST RULES ARE DISCRIMINATORY

Trade Representative Mickey Kantor ruled Canadian broadcast regulations discriminate against American players, but stopped short of launching retaliatory trade sanctions against Canadian cultural industries. He said he will monitor closely negotiations between Nashville-based Country Music Television and Calgary-based New Country Network before imposing sanctions. (Toronto Globe & Mail 7 Feb 96 B2)

AT&T INSURES CREDIT-CARD CUSTOMERS AGAINST CYBER-FRAUD

AT&T will insure its Universal credit-card customers against unauthorized charges made on the Internet as long as they were using AT&T WorldNet for their Internet connection. The protection is not subject to the \$50 deductible that credit card companies typically reserve the right to charge when credit cards are stolen or missing. AT&T's VP for Gateway Services says the guarantee demonstrates AT&T's commitment to Internet shopping: "We hear the fears from the consumer, and stories about hackers, whether related to credit cars or not, fan those fears." (Wall Street Journal 7 Feb 96 B5)

CAR LOANS IN CYBERSPACE

IBM and Chase Manhattan Bank are developing a system for processing car loans over the Internet, and hope to install the system at 200 dealerships by the end of the year. Reynolds & Reynolds, a software company, is developing a similar system. Loan processing and approval under such systems will take only ten minutes for an applicant with a strong credit history. (New York Times 8 Feb 96 C4)

PACKARD BELL GETS CASH, ZENITH DATA

Packard Bell has arranged a complicated deal with France's Cie. des Machines Bull and Japan's NEC Corp., which will result in a \$650 million cash infusion and Packard Bell ownership of Zenith Data Systems. "This gives Packard Bell breathing room that they desperately need and it was one of the very few scenarios where Packard Bell could get themselves out of a corner and still retain control of the business," says an analyst for Dataquest. The move would give Packard Bell instant access to Zenith Data's big corporate and government accounts, and could propel it past No. 1 Compaq

Computer to become the largest PC vendor in the U.S. (Wall Street Journal 7 Feb 96 A3)

IN SEARCH OF "ROBOTIQUETTE"

As the number of search engines on the Web increases, the problem of robot gridlock looms. So far, robot software writers have voluntarily included restrictions on how long robots can linger at a Web site and how often they may visit, but industry experts predict that traffic jams lie ahead if the number of robots increases significantly or if competition overwhelms the collegiality that's governed creators of search engines such as Lycos and Yahoo. Worse yet are programs that enable individuals to launch their own robots. "It would be like everyone deciding to get off of the public transportation system and drive to work," says Lycos's chief scientist. "The overall structure of the Internet couldn't handle it." One solution, says a computer science professor at the University of Washington, would be to make smarter robots that could conduct more rational searches. (Business Week 12 Feb 96 p88)

INTERNET USAGE POLICIES

Neal J. Friedman, a specialist in online computer law, says that "employees are under the misapprehension that the First Amendment applies in the workplace -- it doesn't. Employees need to know they have no right of privacy and no right of free speech using company resources." According to Computerworld, a number of employers are adopting Internet usage policies, such as one developed at Florida Atlantic University:
<<http://www.fau.edu/rinaldi/net/netpol.txt> > (Computerworld 5 Feb 96 p55)

VISA MOVES TO INTRANET SYSTEM

Visa International Inc. is getting ready to save a lot of trees: this summer it will connect its 19,000 member banks to an intranet in the hope that it will reduce, if not eliminate, the more than 2 million documents that they collectively send Visa each day. Visa's move to a private network is right in tune with the times -- two thirds of all large companies either have an internal Web server installed or are thinking about it, and industry analysts believe that soon internal Web servers will outnumber external ones 10 to one. Forrester Research predicts the intranet server business will hit \$1 billion by the year 2000. (Information Week 29 Jan 96 p15)

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Technical support is provided by the Office of Information Technology,
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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE

The CAUSE organization's annual conference on information technology in higher education is scheduled for the end of this month in New Orleans. The conference will bring together administrators, academicians and other managers of information resources. For full conference information check out <<http://cause-www.colorado.edu> > or send e-mail to conf@cause.colorado.edu.

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Windows 95 Customer Advisory "Boza" Virus

Microsoft has learned that Windows 95 is the target of a new computer virus called the "Boza" virus. The virus is not contained within the Windows 95 product. Although the virus is not widespread, Windows 95 customers should be aware that they may encounter this virus by downloading and running an infected program from the Internet, an electronic bulletin board, or an online service, or by running a program from a floppy disk that contains the virus.

To reduce the spread of the virus, Microsoft is working closely with anti-virus software vendors such as Symantec and McAfee Associates to provide protection as soon as possible. McAfee has posted an antivirus update to address this virus, and Symantec will do so shortly.

Running an infected program can infect up to three Win32 programs in the current directory. When an infected program is executed, it occasionally displays a dialog box with a message from the authors of the virus. Apparently, the virus copies itself to other programs only for the purpose of displaying this message.

Microsoft recommends that customers take the following steps:

1. Do not run unknown programs that are downloaded or copied from a floppy disk.
2. If unknown files have been executed on your computer, or if you don't know whether your computer might contain infected files, obtain a current virus scanner from an anti-virus software vendor and periodically check your computer for infections.

Kids Computing Corner
Frank Sereno, Editor

The Kids' Computing Corner

Strategy Games of the World
Dual format CD-ROM for Windows and Macintosh
for ages 8 to 14
price about \$40
from Edmark Corporation
P.O. Box 97021
Redmond, WA 98073-9721
206-556-8484

Program Requirements

IBM		Macintosh	
CPU:	486/33	CPU:	Color Macintosh
RAM:	8 MB	RAM:	8 MB
OS:	Windows 3.1, Windows 95	OS:	System 7.0.1
Video:	640 by 480 with 256 colors	Video:	256
	colors, 13" monitor		
Hdisk:	2 MB	Hdisk:	?
CD-ROM:	Double-speed recommended	CD-ROM:	Double-speed
	recommended		
Misc.:	Sound card, mouse		

by Frank Sereno

Strategy Games of the World is an entertaining and stimulating challenge for children and adults. It combines the challenge of three venerable, classic games with the opportunity to develop thinking strategies which will be used in problem-solving the many challenges of life.

The games are Nine Men's Morris, Go-Moku and Mancala. Each included game was chosen for the simplicity of its design and rules, yet each has increasing complexity of game play as the player gains experience. These are games for a lifetime of strategy building without difficult rules to remember, such as in chess.

In Nine Men's Morris, the game board consists of three concentric squares with intersecting lines running through the midpoint of each side. Wherever two lines meet creates an intersection. Each player alternates turns to place his nine pieces on the intersections of his choosing. Once the pieces are on the board, the players again alternate turns sliding one of their pieces to open intersections. The object is to place three of your pieces in a row either horizontally or vertically during both the placement and movement phases of the game. When you make a "mill," you can then remove one of your opponent's pieces. The game is won when the opponent only has two pieces or he cannot make a legal move.

Go-Moku is a fascinating game of the Far East. The board is a grid which can be from nine to eighteen grids square. The object of the game is to get five stones in a row either horizontally, vertically or diagonally. Players take turns placing stones on the board. You will quickly learn to recognize patterns which can be used to generate or block five stone lines.

Mancala has its origins in Africa, and it is the most complex of the three games. The board in this version consists of twelve holes plus two larger holes at each end of the board called "stores." Mancala is different in that instead of owning game pieces, you own the holes on your side of the board. The object of the game is to move the pieces counterclockwise around the board so most of the stones will end in your store. The game starts with an equal number of stones in each hole. The stones can number between three and seven. You select a hole and then proceed around the board dropping the stones from that hole one at a time in each successive hole. If the last stone drops into your store, you get another turn. If your last stone lands in an empty hole on your side of the game board, you capture the stones in the hole opposite that one on your opponent's side of the board. The game ends when one player has no stones to move and the opposing player adds all stones on his side of the board to his store. Playing with more stones makes the game much more difficult.

The games use a common interface. A Strategy Coach is available for advice and specific game moves by clicking on him. While his assistance does not assure victory, he makes the game more enjoyable for inexperienced players. The computer opponent is the Game Master. He will also give advice when clicked on, but it is of a generic variety and is not related to the current game situation. In the upper right corner of the screen is a grouping of icons. A stop button exits the current game. The question mark enables a multimedia demonstration of the game. The globe icon activates a multimedia history of the game and its creators. Left and right arrow icons are used to playback or take back moves in the current game. The player icon calls up the game options screen. These options include a slider for increasing the difficulty of the computer opponent, enabling game variations, and to start a new game against a friend or the computer.

Each game features three Game Masters. Each has his own playing style and strategies from which the player can learn. At the higher difficulty levels, these games will challenge adults. Most players will have many hours of fun and stimulating challenge before they defeat the masters at the highest difficulty level.

The featured learning tool is the Real-World Strategy Videos. During games against the computer, the Strategy Coach will hold up a sign to indicate a

video is available. Click on the sign and people from all walks of life will tell the strategies they use to solve problems. They even give advice on how to use their strategies in the games. Problem-solving is the most important skill in today's job market. While many people may think that such skills (otherwise known as common sense) are innate, they are learned behavior. These skills can be enhanced through education and practice such as found in Strategy Games of the World.

The program features colorful and interesting graphics. The animations are done well and have many humorous touches. The audio portion of the program features excellent voice characterizations. Each character has a distinct personality. The digitized sounds and voices have excellent clarity. The only shortcoming of the program is the lack of music. Often the program is too quiet. This may make thinking easier for some players, but it would have been a nice touch if a background music option using music from the lands of the game's creation.

The interface is nearly flawless. It is well-designed and easy to use. A comprehensive manual is included with the program which includes troubleshooting help. Free technical assistance can be obtained by calling or by e-mail.

Everyone should enjoy these games. They are fun but have simple rules. The challenge is in the defeating the gradually increasing skill of the computer opponents. Another feature that will maintain the player's interest is the many expressions portrayed by the coaches and masters. Some animations are hilariously funny.

Strategy Games of the World has outstanding educational value. Problem-solving is skill we need for everyday living. Dozens of times each day we make decisions through problem-solving. The skills your child can build today will help him throughout his life. One great feature of the Real-World Strategy Videos is that "common" people are giving the advice. Children aren't given the opportunity to believe that any special qualities are needed to be a good problem-solver. They could have picked up an incorrect message if only famous people were used for the videos.

Strategy Games of the World is a great bargain. It is reasonably priced and provides many hours of learning fun. The program comes with a thirty-day moneyback guarantee. And here's the special bonus. Through April 30, Edmark is giving a free copy of any its titles with the purchase of Strategy Games of the World. Simply send the order form marked with your choice from Edmark's award-winning software, proof of purchase, UPC code from the packaging and \$5.00 for shipping and handling. Strategy Games of the World offers gaming fun, valuable learning opportunities and a free game. This is a great family software package.

Ratings

Graphics	9.0
Sound	9.0
Interface	9.5
Play Value	9.0
Educational Value	9.5
Bang for the Buck	9.0
Average	9.17

Powerhouse Entertainment Announces New Software

Powerhouse Entertainment has developed FastLANET live action video technology which allows players to navigate through live action footage. Action moves

seamlessly between scenes as players make in-game decisions. No more waiting for scenes to load!

The MOVIEGAMET series of games incorporates actual film footage into fast-paced action games. The first two titles were produced for IBM. The Jungle Book uses footage from Disney's 1994 live-action movie of the same name. This game should be available now. The second game is Pinocchio. This game will be released simultaneously with the new film from New Line Cinema starring Oscar-winner Martin Landau and Home Improvement's Jonathan Taylor Thomas.

In the second quarter of '96, Powerhouse Entertainment will release its first game under its own label. Collision combines demolition driving action with a save-the-world goal. In a post-apocalyptic America, players must battle dozens of enemies before battling a death match against the game's protagonist, Spine. Using driving skills and radar, the player seeks out and destroys the cars of Spine's legions. Along the way, he will find weapons and equipment that will aid him in his quest. The action is fast and furious, the video is engrossing.

Powerhouse Entertainment is in negotiations with several studios to do MOVIEGAME projects in conjunction with major theatrical releases for summer and Christmas 1996.

Hansel & Gretel and the Enchanted Castle

Windows 95 CD-ROM
for all ages
MSRP \$49.95
TerraGlyph Interactive Studios
1375 Remington Road
Schaumburg, IL 60173
708-413-4100

Program Requirements

CPU:	486/33	OS:	Windows 95
RAM:	8 MB	Video:	640 x 480, 256 colors
		HDISK:	100k
		CD-ROM:	Double-speed
		Misc.:	Sound card, mouse

by Frank Sereno

TerraGlyph uses amazing, innovative technology to bring a classic fairy tale to life. With rich, lush graphics, a professional sound track and fine educational features, Hansel & Gretel is a multimedia feast for the senses.

Hansel & Gretel is a classic tale of a wood chopper, his children and the shrewish stepmother. It has been adapted into an adventure game suitable for most children. Three new characters have been added who befriend the children. These characters also add to the gaming features as the player must listen to clues from Prin the Imp to find his hiding places to complete the game.

The game features a very elegant point-and-click interface. The cursor changes as it passes over various game features. As a pointing device, it is split into halves. The top half when black indicates a verbal identification which can be heard when the right mouse button is pressed. The bottom half

turns white when it passes over an object with an action associated with it. Clicking the left button will activate the action spot. Another part of the game involves finding Prin the Imp. The player must use the right mouse button to find his hiding place to progress through the witch's gingerbread house. When the cursor passes over an exit or path, it will turn solid white. The cursor changes to the TerraGlyph logo when moved to the lower left corner of the screen. Clicking the mouse at this juncture will take the player to the options screen where he can save games, change settings and view help tutorials. Moving the mouse the lower right corner turns it into an ear which will cause the computer to repeat Prin's last hint.

The best educational feature is the option to play the game in several languages. The program has two language options. First, the player can choose to hear the narration in either English, French, German, Japanese or Spanish. The second option is to choose the language for object identification and for the clues in Prin's hide-and-seek game. The player can click on many objects and learn its name in either English, French, German, Japanese and Spanish. You can hear the narration in one language and hear object names in a second language. The option to mix and match languages not only adds to the game's educational value, but also it gives more play value.

The beauty of Hansel & Gretel is breathtaking. The richness of the colors, the attention to small details and the flawless animations are fantastic. This is combined with excellent performances. Voice characterizations have a broad range of emotion without overacting. The music is inspiring and uplifting, except the stepmothers song which is quite comical. Hansel & Gretel can be mesmerizing.

Rated solely as an adventure game, it is best suited for gamers between the ages of six and ten. It isn't complex enough for older children, although I do believe they will enjoy watching the story unfold (I know I did!). The game itself is really too short. But rating it as a whole of its part, it is a good buy. I have seen Hansel & Gretel available at Egghead's for about \$40. Immerse yourself into a timeless story of love and courage. It is an experience that the entire family can share.

Ratings

Graphics	10.0
Sound	10.0
Interface	9.5
Play Value	8.5
Educational Value	8.5
Bang for the Buck	8.5
Average	9.17

And that's all for another installment of The Kids' Computing Corner. Thank you for reading!

From the Atari Editor's Desk

"Saying it like it is!"

Darn! I'm still waiting for my new BBS software that I mentioned in last week's issue. I really have little patience sometimes! I've been looking forward to getting started with a BBS system, with just a little bit of trepidation. It's tough leaving a comfortable habit and moving into something totally new, but I've been told that I'll get over it real soon! Good thing. Some of the hardware I've been anticipating moving into for the BBS has been arranged already; and plans to add much more storage space and CDROMs are being "negotiated" at the moment. I hope to have the new system up and running by the first of March, if not sooner. Once it's up, and the old system backed-up and put into cyber-storage, we'll let you know!

Other than my personal saga, there's been little going on to report, at the moment. Our U.K. correspondents are feverishly working on a few articles; so they should be available for us shortly (I hope!). In the meantime, I'll continue to finish up on the few ongoing articles that I have laying around; and we'll keep you apprised of our progress.

Until next time...

Show News STR InfoFile

MIST AtariFest VII in Indy, July 13th

New date for MIST, the Mid-Indiana AtariFest for an 8th year, is July 13. The town is full of racers and auto buffs, and there's hardly a sleeping room to be had later in the month ... so MIST is July 13.

Same times as in the past: Open at 10 a.m. and close when there's no one left. That's 10 a.m. Indianapolis Time (11 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time) Indianapolis is year-around on Eastern Standard Time, Never on Daylight. Same place ... two ballrooms at the Best Western Waterfront Plaza Hotel ... and room to spread out the merchandise as well as the crowd. Last year's event attracted nearly 350 ticket-buying Atarians (almost as many as the year before, although it may not have looked that way since we were not so crowded).

Charlie Sears is ready to take table reservations, and he might be enticed to get you a special spot if you call early and pay up early: Call his home at 317.535-4829 or leave him mail on his Crossroad/MIST BBS at 317-535-1643 or 317-780.5473 (FidoNet 1:231/310.0 and AtariNet 51:203/8).

You can reply to me here at shuffman@ideanet.doe.state.in.us (and I do intended to get back on GENie, assuming it continues to be the Atari Place To Be ... but I have been playing the WWWeb Games a lot lately and had no time for GENie).

Hotel rooms will be scarce even on July 13, the Best Western people tell us, but they agreed to give us a deal about \$5 more than last year: \$55 Single or \$61 Double ... but you MUST RESERVE the room JUNE 12 -- 30 days in advance of the MIST Fest to get that rate (and probably to get a room at all).

To get that rate, DO NOT call Best Western's 800 number; you must call the Indianapolis hotel itself and make the reservation with the Conference Staff. If you call at night or on a weekend, leave a message for them to call you back. They do that.

The Indianapolis phone number is 317.299.8400 and the Conference Staff extension is x393. It's not a bad place to stay, as you know, even if the restaurant leaves something to be desired some years. The indoor pool is nice and there are several franchise restaurants nearby, as is the Indianapolis Motor Speedway and the Indianapolis Raceway Park.

What else? We anticipate an incremental increase in our costs, but nothing dramatic. We will get contracts in the mail real soon now. E-mail me with any changes in address you suspect might delay mail in the Postal Service. There are too few of us to let anyone get lost or strayed.

CN Alive & Well STR InfoFile
Release

News & Information

CURRENT NOTES MAGAZINE

CURRENT NOTES is out! The JAN/FEB issue is packed with news, information, reviews and support . . . everything you need to help get the best from TOS/GEM computing, Geneva, MagiC, MagiCMac and much more!
IN THIS ISSUE:

1. - Reviews of NeoDesk4, CalAppt, and TOS/GEM Disk Formatters*
2. - Our new series on Personal Info Managers (PIMs) begins*
3. - Current Notes welcomes . . . CyberSTrider*
4. - alt.info.everything*
5. - Gorgeous image processing*
6. - Real MIDI sounds real*
7. - Small Office/Home Office, Copyrights*
8. - Creeping consumerism*
9. - ASH, Blow-Up, CAB, chro_Magic, GENie, GNU, Hades, Overscan*

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Jaguar Section

Atari Rumors Still Active!
Defender 2000 Arrives At Atari!
From the Editor's Controller - Playin' it like it is!

It's too bad that the ongoing and new rumors about Atari's future are going to overshadow the arrival of the Jaguar's latest offering, Defender 2000. D2K has been one of the most highly anticipated Jaguar titles to arrive on the scene for what seems an eternity. But, the latest speculation that Atari is, once again, abandoning the Jaguar and PC-gaming arena is likely to be the headline for a bit longer. In fact, the only bit of news that we have for you this week in this section are a couple of conflicting reports regarding Atari's future. Neither one comes from Atari; and the rumors were that Atari would be making a major announcement this week. Well, as of Thursday night, no such announcement appeared, as expected after talking with sources within Atari.

It's been really disappointing everywhere lately, since the recent layoffs and re-structuring at Atari. Little news and online activity has been happening for over a week now. Even the Usenet, usually a plethora of message activity, has significantly declined. It's scary. Perhaps, once Defender 2000 hits the streets, the activity will once again rise to the occasion, but I feel that until there's some semblance of concrete information regarding Atari's future, things will remain on the quiet side.

To say the least, it's also disheartening here at the Atari arena of STRreport. What once was a thriving level of news and information, and excitement within the staff members has also turned very quiet. Reviews are slow(er) to be completed; and excitement to receive new games to review has slowed. It's even frustrating sitting in my chair putting together each issue lately. There's so little to talk about these days. It used to be tough to decide what not to include and save for the following week to avoid having an issue that was prohibitively large to download. Now, it's "do I have anything worthwhile to report without embarrassing myself? each week! Very weird, and very uncomfortable.

Regardless, we're here and will continue to be here, week after week, until there's no longer anything worthwhile to talk about. We're hoping that this doesn't occur for quite some time to come! As mentioned last week, we've been holding off on including the entire listing of Jaguar titles, available and pending, until the latest schedule has been finalized. Checking with my sources at Atari earlier this week, I learned that that schedule still has not been approved and released. So, what we have included this week, as usual, is an updated current listing of Jaguar titles with the latest MSRP prices. As you'll notice, most of the current titles have been greatly reduced in price.

So, if you're like me, you'll be looking for a copy of Defender 2000 this weekend. I think that we're all going to be enjoying this game for quite some time. I believe that this game could surpass Tempest 2000 and Alien vs. Predator for the most popular title for the Jaguar to-date. We'll soon know!

Until next time...

Jaguar Catalog STR InfoFile What's currently available, what's coming out.

Current Available Titles

CAT #	TITLE	MSRP	DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER
J9000	Cybermorph	\$59.99	Atari Corp.
J9006	Evolution:Dino Dudes	\$19.87	Atari Corp.
J9005	Raiden	\$19.87	FABTEK, Inc/Atari

Corp.			
J9001	Trevor McFur/Crescent Galaxy	\$19.87	Atari Corp.
J9010	Tempest 2000	\$32.87	Llamasoft/Atari Corp.
J9028	Wolfenstein 3D	\$26.87	id/Atari Corp.
JA100	Brutal Sports FootBall	\$39.99	Telegames
J9008	Alien vs. Predator	\$42.87	Rebellion/Atari Corp.
J9029	Doom	\$42.87	id/Atari Corp.
J9036	Dragon: Bruce Lee	\$19.87	Atari Corp.
J9003	Club Drive	\$19.87	Atari Corp.
J9007	Checkerered Flag	\$19.87	Atari Corp.
J9012	Kasumi Ninja	\$19.87	Atari Corp.
J9042	Zool 2	\$19.87	Atari Corp
J9020	Bubsy	\$19.87	Atari Corp
J9026	Iron Soldier	\$19.87	Atari Corp
J9060	Val D'Isere Skiing	\$26.87	Atari Corp.
	Cannon Fodder	\$29.95	Virgin/C-West
	Syndicate	\$44.99	Ocean
	Troy Aikman Football	\$64.99	Williams
	Theme Park	\$44.99	Ocean
	Sensible Soccer		Telegames
	Double Dragon V	\$54.99	Williams
J9009E	Hover Strike	\$30.72	Atari Corp.
J0144E	Pinball Fantasies	\$42.50	C-West
J9052E	Super Burnout	\$42.87	Atari Corp.
J9070	White Men Can't Jump	\$32.87	Atari Corp.
	Flashback	\$54.99	U.S. Gold
J9078E	VidGrid (CD)		Atari Corp
J9016E	Blue Lightning (CD)	\$59.99	Atari Corp
J9040	Flip-Out	\$32.87	Atari Corp
J9082	Ultra Vortek	\$42.87	Atari Corp
C3669T	Rayman	\$59.99	Ubi Soft
	Power Drive Rally	\$59.99	TWI
J9101	Pitfall	\$42.87	Atari Corp.
J9086E	Hover Strike CD	\$49.99	Atari Corp.
J9031E	Highlander I (CD)	\$49.99	Atari Corp.
J9061E	Ruiner Pinball	\$42.87	Atari Corp.
	Dragon's Lair	\$49.99	Readysoft
J9097E	Missile Command 3D	\$49.00	Atari Corp.
J9091E	Atari Karts	\$49.99	Atari Corp.
J9044E	Supercross 3D	\$49.99	Atari Corp.
J9106E	Fever Pitch Soccer	\$49.99	Atari Corp.
J9043E	I-War	\$49.99	Atari Corp.
J9069	Myst (CD)	\$49.99	Atari Corp.
	Primal Rage	\$59.99	Time Warner
	Battlemorph	\$49.99	Atari Corp.
J9055	Baldies	\$49.99	Atari Corp.
J9089	NBA Jam TE	\$57.99	Atari Corp.
	Zoop	\$42.99	Atari Corp.
	Space Ace	\$52.99	Readysoft
	Defender 2000	\$59.99	Atari Corp.

Available Soon

CAT #	TITLE	MSRP	DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER
	Fight For Life	\$59.99	Atari Corp.
	...Mutant Penguins	\$49.99	Atari Corp.
	World Tour Racing	TBA	Atari Corp
	Breakout 2000	\$42.50	Atari Corp.
	Max Force	\$59.99	Atari Corp.

J9021	Brett Hull Hockey	\$59.99	Atari Corp.
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Hardware and Peripherals

CAT #	TITLE	MSRP	MANUFACTURER
J8001	Jaguar (no cart)	\$99.99	Atari Corp.
J8904	Composite Cable	\$19.95	
J8901	Controller/Joypad	\$24.95	Atari Corp.
J8905	S-Video Cable	\$19.95	
	CatBox	\$69.95	ICD
J8800	Jaguar CD-ROM	\$149.99	Atari Corp.
J8908	JagLink Interface	\$26.76	Atari Corp.
J8910	Team Tap		
	4-Player Adapter)	\$26.76	Atari Corp.
J8907	Jaguar ProController	\$27.87	Atari Corp.
J8911	Memory Track	\$26.76	Atari Corp.
J8909	Tempest 2000:		
	The Soundtrack	\$12.99	Atari Corp.

Jaguar Online STR InfoFile Online Users Growl & Purr!

[Editor's note: As reported, speculated, and discussed in recent editorials in this section in past weeks, the rumors of Atari's "demise" and future are still being "reported". The latest "reports" have come to us from Next Generation magazine, as well as Game Zero. I've also talked to various sources within Atari the past few weeks. The most recent phone discussion supports/confirms what we've been saying here in the past couple of issues, and "supported" by the Game Zero article below. As mentioned earlier, there has been no "official announcement" from Atari. It's my belief that we won't hear anything "official" from Atari until their re-structuring plans have been finalized. It's also my opinion that anything is possible at this moment. I have no firm information to lead me to any conclusion at the present time. Perhaps this will change in the very near future - I hope so. We'll be there every step of the way! In the meantime, we offer you the latest articles regarding the various reports and rumors, below.]

Reprinted from CompuServe's Atari Gaming Forums:

News Flash STR InfoFile

From:

Next Generation's WEB Page...

We understand from insiders at the company that, as expected, Atari will withdraw from software publishing and hardware manufacturing in the game market. And Atari will make the bizarre move into the manufacture of computer peripherals. The details we have are sketchy but it seems that a partnership will be announced with a company called JTS (or similar) with a view to manufacturing removable hard drives for the PC. These products have grown in popularity recently with the market leader being Zip from I-Omega. Our sources say that the move was announced in a company meeting on Friday, which was followed by an questions and answers session. But Atari is hoping to hold off on its announcement. As has become customary of late, Atari is refusing to return Next Generation Online's calls.

The following report comes from Game Zero at:

http://www.gamezero.com/team-0/whats_new/ -- check there for updates.

After a good number of phone calls it comes down to this. Our contact within Atari has indicated to us that the MMWire report as well as other rumors many of you have seen around the newsgroups are pretty much false (essentially the line is that Atari was liquidating their video game operations). Atari has admitted to us that they are undergoing a rework of their internal operations, and that this current round of restructuring began shortly following everyone's return from the Winter CES '96 show. As the situation currently stands these issues have been made clear to us:

- Yes, there actually is quite a bit going on as you might guess from this above list. Atari has indicated that they are still active and viable as a company with no plans to cease operations any time in the future. We will continue to cover this issue as information becomes available.

- Sunnyvale, Ca ATARI CORPORATION TO MOVE HEADQUARTERS
with Continued Downsizing & Re-Structuring

Most onlookers seemed to either conveniently ignore this fact or never recognized its being there. While an immediate view would indicate the picture is anything but rosy, all informed observers seem to realize the Lindner Fund is a Blue Chip Fund managed by some of the most competent minds in the business. What it appears to indicate is, perhaps, the values of Atari common stock is about to rise well above that of the interest rate of the now converted Bonds. Of course its all conjecture and it takes a rather

mature, level-headed individual to understand that it is only information. Nothing more or less. Time will tell exactly what will, is or has taken place.

At the same time, this reporter remarked a few weeks ago that Atari Corp. was going to be moving its headquarters. The usual few "mouthed" their disbelief, as expected. Meanwhile the New "Digs" for Atari will be the refurbished Bank of America Building at Matilda and El Camino not far from their present location. (a bit smaller) The move itself is, not surprisingly, eagerly anticipated by many of those still working at Atari.

In closing, there were no denials coming forth about the further "downsizing" of the current workforce as it occurred late today. On a more gleeful note, sales of the Jaguar are continuing at a brisk pace. About the Jag's future who knows?? The final analysis has yet to come. When it does.. the decisions about the Jaguar's future (of any version) are certain to be made known. Who is Iomega and a zip what?

ONLINE WEEKLY STReport OnLine

The wires are a hummin'!

PEOPLE... ARE TALKING

On CompuServe

compiled by
Joe Mirando
73637,2262

Hey friends and neighbors! Thanks for coming back again this week. As our numbers dwindle it becomes more and more important for we hold-outs to keep in touch and communicate with each other.

I find it a bit amusing to think that, right from the start, this column was intended for that very purpose. And while the banter here on CompuServe gets thinner and thinner as time goes on, there are still plenty of us around to ask and answer questions. Why would I find it amusing? Because back when I started this column the Atari community was, if not robust, at least a force to be reckoned with on the three major online services (GEnie, CompuServe, and Delphi at the time).

As it stands now we are a shrinking population. Let's take a look at some of the things that folks are interested in.

From the Atari Computing Forums

Charles Marslett talks a bit about the ins and outs of CompuServe access:

"Web browsing is a lot easier than HMI forum access -- the interface to CIS is well documented (PPP with dynamic IP address assignment), and at least in

the Unix and IBM-ish worlds, there are third-party browsers designed for generic Internet service providers that work fine with CIS as the service provider already (Netscape, for example). I don't know of any for the Atari (haven't hooked a modem to my Atari in perhaps 5 years), but that don't mean there aren't any....

Compuserve services and forums are an entirely different issue, though!"

Sysop Bob Retelle tells Charles:

"Actually there are a small number of web browsers for the Atari computer, but from what I've seen here, they all require a SLIP connection, and won't work through the CompuServe PPP connection. There are always rumors of something being worked on somewhere, but so far nothing has surfaced.

A few members have reported limited success configuring the SLIP browsers to work through other Internet providers, but so far there's nothing equivalent to the ease of use of a Netscape Navigator.

I was just thinking that if the Atari HMI project succeeds, there might be enough momentum to go on and add the PPP functionality too..."

Mike Myers asks for help with his Spectre GCR MAC emulator:

"OK, here we go. I've got an Atari 1040 ST. and, as you, a used Spectre. The thing had the ungrateful indecency to wreck partitions, so, rather than recycle the disks, and chalk it off to bad judgement on my part, I put it away. Now, it's being given a second chance, where it can't get at partitions, in floppies only. However, last night an attempt to transfer the boot disk to a backup, with a slight but important procedural mistake, wiped the boot disk. A Mac dealer has supplied a 6.0.5 system boot disk from his regular stock. Now, I can still get to the Stalker Logo with the menu on the top, and it will run with a picture of a floppy with what seems to be a smiley face (It's too small to tell.) That happens only after F2 is hit. But Nothing happened for about 20 minutes. Earlier, I got a disk with ? in the middle."

Kevin Hawthorne tells Mike:

"I've found the Spectre/Mac emulation operating system to be more stable than my ST's TOS when it comes to trashing hard drive partitions. In fact, I run Spectre on my ST almost half the time. I've got a new PowerMac sitting three feet away on my other desk, and, rather than swivel my chair around and use it, I still prefer using the ST. I guess what I'm saying is don't be afraid to run this thing on your hard drive. It really is a dream once it gets going. Now... where were we... Oh, yeah. When you say you attempted to make a backup boot disk.... were you making a backup of your Spectre 3.0 disk or your System/Finder disk? From what you described, you got to the disk/question mark icon, which means that it's got the Mac OS up, but it's looking for a system/finder disk/folder/files. So, we can assume that's the problem. It also sounds like you're running Spectre from drive B (that's why it would respond to F2 [F1 being drive A, F2 drive B, F3-next available drive or partition, etc]). Sounds like you need a valid System/Finder disk. The one from your Mac friend may not work..."

I found that I had to format a disk - single-sided only, put that disk in a REAL Mac, and copy the system & finder to it. THEN my ST/Spectre/Emulating a Mac would read it and boot. I could be wrong about the HFS disk having to be single-sided for your computer, but with my 720K floppy system, that's the way it had to be. And, you should be able to format that floppy using the

Transverter utility on your Spectre disk, or from within the Spectre program itself (you know, the same menu that let you set up a "Mac" partition for your hard drive). Also, some ground rules: turn off all accessories, cacheing, etc. Also, remove any weird hardware "keys" you may have. The only thing that I've found that works with Spectre is a faster clock (i.e., 16MHZ AdSpeed, etc.) - everything else should be off. Now, run the Spectre program from the ST disk. When you get to the Spectre Window/menu, leave the ST Spectre ST disk in your drive until you get the floppy/question mark icon. Now, insert the System/Finder (MAC/HFS formatted) disk with the system folder into your floppy. If you've got a Syquest or Zip Drive, things get a lot easier - you can copy programs from your Mac right into your ST and really start flying! In lieu of a removable hard drive, however, you can modem files from a Mac to your ST while it's pretending to be a MAC. I recommend Z-Term as a good, basic term program for the MAC.

If you want, I could send you a floppy (HFS) with System 6.07 & finder on it to get you started. By the way, single-sided HFS floppies are also readable by a real MAC. Not a lot of space (360K), but it's enough to transfer the basic files back & forth until you finally get the system up & running."

Paul Hutchinson posts:

"I have an atari 1040st how do i get out on the internet or world wide web and is it possible to run cd-roms on atari any help would be great."

Sysop Bob Retelle tells Paul:

"Right now there is no WWW application for the ST that works very well.

We've heard of programmers working on various solutions, but so far there's nothing that works like the "web browsers" from other platforms.

But you CAN access the Usenet newsgroups of the Internet with your ST right here on CompuServe. This includes all of the "comp.sys.atari" groups.

Just GO USENET and follow the directions for the "ASCII newsreader" that you'll find there.

An ST can use a CD-ROM drive... you'll need a SCSI CD-ROM drive mechanism, a SCSI host adapter board for the ST, and the proper software drivers.

Give Toad Computers a call at: 1-800-448-8623 (or 410-544-6943) and ask them what you'll need. They should be able to set you up with everything."

Albert Dayes at Atari Explorer Online Magazine tells Paul:

"For internet support (GO USENET) and you can subscribe to Atari related newsgroups. There are a few World Wide Web readers floating around but I have not used them myself.

For CD-ROMs the software you need is ExtенDOS PRO v2.x and a SCSI CD-ROM drive. For a list of compatible CD-ROM discs see the file in the library which has a large list of discs."

Richard Rives adds:

"Its a very nice upgrade. Works perfectly with my Apple CD600 and now records audio off the SCSI bus."

Karen Stimson asks:

"How do I send a compressed text file (zipped) through the internet? I tried to upload it to Compuserve as a text file (ASCII), but the addressee received a file of garbled ASCII characters. When I try sending it as binary I get a message saying you can't send binary files through the net. I'm using Flash as my telecomm program. Any assistance appreciated!"

Mark Kelling tells Karen:

"ZIP files and such cannot be sent over standard Internet mail. The 'net is cabable of only 7 bit data while your ZIP file is 8 bit.

There is a very simple solution! ;-) Get a program from the library here called ESSCODE.LZH (look for the latest version, uploaded not long ago). This program will create from your ZIP file a file in the format called UUENCODE. The resulting uuencoded file can be sent over the 'net as a TEXT mail file.

A couple things though -- the uuencoded file will be approximately 1/3 larger than the ZIP and the person receiving your file will also need a program to convert the file back to ZIP from the uuencode format (ESSCODE will do the job)."

Personally, I recommend using "MIME" instead of UUEncode... MIME compresses the file for a more efficient end- product than UUEncode. MIME is also supported by ESSCODE.

Karen Stimson replies:

"I want to thank the gentleman who advised me about Uuencoding for binary files to enable them to be sent through the internet (sorry, I deleted the response to my previous question accidentally and I don't remember who answered my question, so am addressing this again to "all"). I downloaded ESSCODE.LZH and it seems to work fine, but when I try to access the manual I get the message: "To use the ESS-Code context sensitive manual, the ST-Guide accessory must be installed."

There was no such accessory included in the ESSCODE.LZH file I downloaded, and when I checked the libraries, the only ST-Guide files I found were hypertext tools. Again, I will appreciate your advice--thanks in advance!"

Frank Heller tells Karen:

"That would be a program that Michel Forget (the ESSCODE author) includes on a disk sent to you AFTER you register the program with him. I believe Holger Weets is the author of ST-GUIDE. Registering the program is about 10 bucks. A registration notice is included in the ESSCODE.LZH file. It is after all, a shareware program...so getting the manual (by registering) is the hook to get you to pay up. Considering its speed and its reliability...it's a bargain at the price."

Robert Hodgman tells us:

"I currently have a Mega STE with TOS 1.05. I understand that there are good reasons to upgrade to TOS 1.06. Does anyone know what they are? Also I have had problems making contact with CIS lately. Is it just a local problem or have others had problems too."

Albert Dayes of Atari Explorer Online Magazine tells Robert:

"The most current version of tos is 2.06 I believe. It fixes several problems including some with 1.44 meg floppy. You can try Toad Computers since they should have some of the chips.

I have problems sometimes connecting to CIS too. Mostly after it rains which is not too much hear. If you still have problems you should send some e-mail to FEEDBACK ... or (GO FEEDBACK)."

Well folks, that's all I have room for this week. Tune in again next week, same time, same station, and be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

WEB SITE Offer STR Infofile

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STR OnLine! "YOUR INDEPENDENT NEWS SOURCE" February 09, 1996
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